N. Hurd Sculp.

To N. Rice by S. Lake 1773 June 9

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THE DOCTRINE of GRACE:

OR, THE

OFFICE and OPERATIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Vindicated from

The Insults of INFIDELITY,

AND

The Abuses of FANATICISM:

With some Thoughts

(humbly offered to the consideration of the ESTABLISHED CLERGY)

REGARDING

The right method of defending Religion against the attacks of either Party.

IN THREE BOOKS.

BY

WILLIAM Lord Bishop of GLOUCESTER.

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Advertiſement

To the First Edition.

WHILE I was compoſing theſe ſheets to vindicate the honour of Religion, it was given out that I was writing in defence of a late Miniſter of State.

I have a Maſter above, and I have one below; I mean, God and the King. To them my ſervices are bound.

The moſt ſacred of all private ties are *Friendſhip* and *Gratitude*. The duties ariſing from theſe, tho' not altogether ſo extenſive as the other, are ſubſervient only to them.

With reſpect to the great Miniſter here underſtood, His vindication, had

he wanted any, could come, with proper dignity, only from himſelf. And He, tho' for the firſt time, would be here but a Copier: I mean, of the example of that Firſt of Romans *; who being calumniated before the People by one Nævius, an obſcure Plebeian, when he came to make his Defence, which happened to be on the anniverſary of the battle of Zama, addreſſed the Aſſembly in this manner: "It was on this day, Romans, "that I ſubdued your mighty Rival "for Empire, the Carthaginian. Ill "would it become the friends of "Rome to waſte ſuch a day in "wrangling and contention. We "ſhould now be returning thanks to "the immortal Gods for the ſignal "protection they afforded us in that "glorious Conflict. Let us leave "then this Fellow with himſelf, and "aſcend together to the Capitol, to "offer to Jupiter the Deliverer; Who, "on all occaſions as well as this,

* Scipio Africanus; who reſtored his Country by carrying the War from Rome to Carthage.

"hath,

" hath, from my early youth, vouch-
" ſafed to beſtow upon me the grow-
" ing power and the conſtant diſpo-
" ſition to ſupport the honour of my
" Country. And let no God, auſpi-
" cious to Rome, be left uninvoked,
" that the State in its diſtreſſes,
" may never want ſuch Servants as
" I have ſtill endeavoured to approve
" myſelf." When he had ſaid this, he ſtept from the Roſtrum and left the Forum empty; all the People following him to the Capitol.

That *the People followed him* is not ſurely the marvellous part of the ſtory. The thing to be admired is, that a Stateſman ſhould lead the People to prayers.

This indeed is the laſt ſervice a Patriot-Miniſter can render to his Country. And I am well perſuaded (ſo exactly does the example fit the occaſion) that our illuſtrious Modern would have deemed it the crown of his labours to have animated his Fel-

low-Citizens with a ſpirit of true piety towards GOD, as ſucceſsfully as he inflamed them with a ſpirit of Zeal and Fortitude for the KING and Conſtitution.

PRE-

PREFACE.

THE CONTEMPT of *Religion* ſoon followed the ABUSE; and both of them have exiſted almoſt ever ſince the firſt inſtitution of the thing itſelf. For, that corruption of heart, whoſe diſorder, *Religion* was ordained to cure, has been ever ſtruggling againſt its Remedy.

I. In the days of Solomon, when *Wiſdom* was at its height, *Folly*, as we learn from many paſſages in the writings of that Sacred Sage, kept equal paces with it. Hence it is that, after he has given many lively paintings of the deformed features of irreligion and bigotry, he ſubjoins directions to the ſober Advocate of Piety and Virtue how beſt to repreſs their inſolence and vanity. ANSWER NOT *a Fool* (ſays he) *according to his Folly, leſt thou alſo be like unto him.* ANSWER *a Fool according to his Folly, leſt he be wiſe in his own conceit* *.

* Prov. xxvi. ver. 4, 5.

Short, isolated Sentences were the mode in which Ancient wisdom delighted to convey its precepts for the regulation of human conduct. But when this natural method had lost the grace of novelty, and a growing refinement had new-coloured the candid simplicity of ancient manners, these instructive Sages found a necessity of giving to their moral maxims the seasoning and poignancy of *Paradoxes*. In these lively and useful sports of fancy, the Son of David, we are told, most excelled. We find them to abound in the writings which bear his name; and we meet with frequent allusions to them in all the parts of sacred Writ, under the names of *Riddles*, *Parables*, and *Dark-sayings*.

Now of all the examples of this species of instruction, there is none more illustrious, or fuller of moral Wisdom, than the *Paradox* just now quoted; or which, in the happiness of the expression, has so artfully conveyed the Key for opening the treasures of it. But as a *dark* conceit and a *dull* one have a great proximity in modern wit; and a nice *difference* is not distinguished from a *contradiction* in modern reasoning; this Paradox of the Sage has been mistaken by his Critics for an absurdity of some of his Transcribers, who

who forgot the negative in the latter member of the Sentence: And ſo, to be ſet right at an eaſier expence than unfolding *dark ſentences of old*; that is to ſay, by exchanging them for *clearer*, of a *modern* date: which *Time* can make ANCIENT READINGS; and which a careful collation of its blunders may hereafter make the TRUE.

II. But they who chuſe to receive Antiquity in its antique Garb, will, perhaps, venture with me to try, if the apparent contradiction in the received Text cannot be fairly unriddled without any other aid than of the words themſelves, in which the *dark ſaying* is conveyed.

Had the *Folly* of theſe *Fools* been only of one condition or denomination, then the advice *to anſwer*, and *not to anſwer*, had been repugnant to itſelf. But as their *Folly* was of various kinds, in ſome of which, *to anſwer* might offend the dignity, and in others, *not to anſwer* might hurt the intereſts of Truth; *To anſwer*, and *not to anſwer*, is a conſiſtent, and may, for ought theſe Critics know, be a very wiſe direction.

Had the Advice been given ſimply and without circumſtance, *to anſwer the Fool*, and *not to anſwer him*, a Critic, who had a reverence for the Text, would ſatisfy himſelf in ſuppoſing, that the different directions referred to the doing a thing *in and out of ſeaſon*. But when, to the general advice about *anſwering*, this circumſtance is added,—*according to his folly*, that interpretation is excluded; and a difficulty indeed ariſes; a difficulty, which has made thoſe who have no reverence for the Text, to accuſe it of abſurdity and contradiction.

But now, to each Direction, reaſons are ſubjoined, Why a *Fool ſhould*, and why he *ſhould not*, *be anſwered:* reaſons, which, when ſet together and compared, are, at firſt ſight, ſufficient to make the Critic ſuſpect, that all the contradiction lies in his own incumbered ideas.

1. The reaſon given, why *a Fool ſhould not be anſwered according to his folly*, is, *leſt he* [the Anſwerer] *be like unto him:*

2. The reaſon given, why *he ſhould be anſwered according to his folly*, is, *leſt he* [the Fool] *be wiſe in his own conceit.*

The

The cauſe aſſigned, of *forbidding to anſwer*, therefore, plainly inſinuates, that the Defender of Religion ſhould not imitate the Inſulter of it in his *modes of diſputation*; which may be compriſed in *ſophiſtry*, *buffoonry*, and *ſcurrility*. For what could ſo much *liken* the Anſwerer to his idiot-Adverſary, as the putting on his Fool's-coat in order to captivate and confound the Rabble?

The cauſe aſſigned, of *directing to anſwer*, as plainly intimates, that the Sage ſhould addreſs himſelf to confute the Fool upon *the Fool's own falſe Principles*, by ſhewing that they lead to Concluſions very wide from the impieties he would deduce from them. And if any thing will prevent the *Fool* from being *wiſe in his own conceit*, it muſt be the diſhonour and the ridicule of having his own Principles turned againſt him; while they are ſhewn to make for the very contrary purpoſe to that, for which he had employed them.

The ſupreme wiſdom conveyed in the two precepts of this unravelled *Paradox*, will be beſt underſtood by explaining the advantages ariſing from the obſervance of each of them.

III. We are *not to answer a fool according to his folly, lest we also be like unto him*— This is the reason given; and a good one it is; sufficient to make any sober man decline a Combat, where even Victory would bring dishonour with it. Now, if our *answer* be of such a nature that we also (tho' with contrary intentions) do injury to Truth, we become *like unto him* in the essential part of his Character. And surely Truth is never more grosly abused, nor its Advocates more dishonoured, than when they employ the foolish arts of *Sophistry*, *Buffoonry*, and *Scurrility* in its defence.

1. To use *fallacious* and inconclusive arguments in support of Truth, is doing it infinite discredit. The practice tends to make men suspect that the questioned Truth is indeed an imposture, when it finds support in the common tricks of Impostors: The least unfavourable inference will be, that the Truth is defended not for its own sake, but for the sake of the Defender: This will make the serious Enquirer less attentive to the issue, and more jealous of the good faith of the Advocate; which cannot but lessen our reverence to the one, and increase unfavourable prejudices towards the other. It tends

tends to reduce the two Parties of *Wiſdom* and *Folly* to a level; when they ſtand on the ſame barren and deceitful Ground. It tends to confound the diſtinction between *true* and *falſe*, and to make all terminate in that moſt malignant ſpecies of *folly*, Pyrronic doubt and uncertainty.

2. To employ *Buffoonry* in this ſervice, is to violate the Majeſty of Truth, which can inforce its influence amongſt men no longer than while its Sanctity of Character is kept ſafe from inſult.

Buffoonry deprives Truth of the only thing ſhe wants, in order to come off victorious; I mean, a *fair hearing*. To *examine*, Men muſt be ſerious; and to *judge*, they muſt be attentive to the argument. Buffoonry gives a levity to the mind, which makes it ſeek entertainment rather than inſtruction, in all that is offered to its inſpection. But let this poor talent be taken at its utmoſt worth, the uſe of it will ſtill raiſe a ſuſpicion, that the Advocate has his cauſe little at heart, while, in the very heat of an important controverſy, he can allow himſelf to be amuſed and diverted by the levity of falſe wit; ſince, in matters that are underſtood to concern us moſt, we are wont to appear, as well as to be,

be, moſt in earneſt: and this ſcandal given by the Advocate, will always do prejudice to the Cauſe.

3. Again, *perſonal abuſe*, that favourite *colour* which glares moſt in the Fool's *Rhetoric*, is carefully to be avoided. For nothing can ſo aſſimilate the Anſwerer to the Fool he is confuting as a want of *Charity*, which this mode of defence ſo openly betrays. To *Charity*, the Fool makes no pretenſions. His very attempt is an avowed violation of it. He would deprive the world of what he himſelf confeſſes to be moſt uſeful to Society, and moſt pleaſing to the natural ſentiments of Man; that is to ſay, *Religion*. He would break down this barrier againſt Evil, he would rob us of this conſolation of Humanity; and in ſuch a Service he follows but his nature and his office, when he vilifies and calumniates all who ſet themſelves to oppoſe his impious projects. But the *end of the Commandment is Charity*.

Theſe are the various modes of *anſwering* which are to be avoided, leſt the Advocate of Religion become *like* the impious Caviller whom he addreſſes himſelf to confute.

IV.

IV. But then, *leſt the Fool ſhould be wiſe in his own conceit*, we are, at the ſame time, bid, *to give him an anſwer*. But how can this be done, in the manner here directed, namely, *according to his folly*, and yet the Anſwerer not become *like unto him*, but, on the contrary, be able to produce the effect here intimated, the cure of the Fool's vain conceit of his ſuperior Wiſdom, is a difficulty indeed; a difficulty worthy the Advocate of truth to undertake: and which a Maſter of his Subject may hope to overcome, in contriving to confute the Fool on his own *falſe Principles*, by ſhewing that they lead to a Concluſion very oppoſite to thoſe free Conſequences he has laboured to deduce from them. And if any thing will allay the *Fool*'s vain *conceit* of himſelf, it muſt be the ſenſe of ſuch a diſhonour. For what can be more ſhameful, than to have his own Principles ſhewn to be deſtructive of his own Concluſions? What more mortifying, than to have thoſe Principles, in whoſe invention he ſo much gloried, or in whoſe uſe he ſo much confided, fairly turned, by all the rules of good Logic, to his own confuſion? Nor is the Partiſan of falſehood more humbled than the Cauſe of truth advanced, by thus anſwering a Fool *according to his folly*. For that Victory where

where the Adverſary is thus made to contribute to his own overthrow is, in common eſtimation, always held to be moſt compleat: that Syſtem being naturally deemed contemptible, whoſe moſt plauſible ſupport draws after it the ruin of what it was raiſed to uphold.

And thus, as the *Wiſe man* directs, is this forward Fool to be treated; whether it be by *ſilence* or *confutation*.

V. That, in general, his folly is to be repreſſed, *according to the dictates of* true *Wiſdom*, the nature of the thing ſufficiently informs us: There was no need of a particular direction to inforce the expediency and neceſſity of ſuch a conduct. But then, beſides, it may ſometimes happen, that the intereſts of Truth require his being *anſwered* even *according to his folly*: And, as our duty here is very liable to *abuſe*, it was expedient to obviate the danger. This, we may obſerve, the ſacred Writer hath done; and with much art and elegance of addreſs.

It may indeed be ſaid, Why this practiſed obliquity in defence of Truth? Is not the purity of her nature rather defiled, than her real intereſts advanced by this indirection?

indirection? And does not Wiſdom ſeem to tell us, that it becomes her dignity to repreſs Folly by thoſe arms only which Wiſdom herſelf hath edged and tempered; that Truth, by the information of her own light, points out the ſtraight road to her abode; and forbids us to riggle into her ſacred preſence thro' by-paths, and the cloudy Medium of falſhood?

But they who talk thus do not ſufficiently reflect on the condition of our weak and purblind Nature, which can ill bear the bright and unſhaded light of Truth. On which account, it is ſo contrived, in the beautiful Order of things, that *Folly*, by thus adminiſtering to her own defeat, ſhould bring us back again into the ways of Wiſdom, from which ſhe hath ſeduced us.

The REDEEMER of Mankind, in condeſcenſion to the infirmities of thoſe he came to ſave, hath taken this very advantage of that eſtabliſhed Order: For, more effectually to ſilence thoſe *Fools* who queſtioned his Miſſion and his Office, he *anſwers them according to their folly*; that is, he demonſtrates to them, on their own erroneous ideas of the nature and end of the LAW, (formed on rabbinical traditions

tions and the reveries of Greek Philoſophers) he demonſtrates to them, I ſay, the truth and reaſonableneſs of the Gospel. The pure and unabated ſplendor of Truth, uſhered in by Wiſdom, would have only added to their judicial blindneſs: for to bear it undazzled, they had need of the preſence of that Spirit of Truth, which was not yet come, but only promiſed to be ſent. Indeed, when this Sacred Guide was come, and while he continued in an *extraordinary* manner, to enlighten the underſtandings of the Faithful, there was no occaſion for this inforced miniſtry of *Folly*, to contribute to her own deſtruction. And therefore the *firſt* Propagators of the Goſpel proceeded more directly to the eſtabliſhment of the Truth, and on the ſolid principles of *Wiſdom* only. Yet now again, in the *ordinary* communications of Grace, this direction of the *Wiſe man* will be as uſeful as ever, to the intereſts of Virtue and Religion, Answer a Fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.

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A DISCOURSE ON THE OFFICE and OPERATIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

BOOK I.

CHAP. I.

THE bleſſed Jeſus came into the world ON THE PART OF GOD, to declare pardon and ſalvation to the forfeited poſterity of Adam. He teſtified the truth of his Miſſion by amazing miracles, and ſealed man's Redemption, in his Blood, by the more amazing Sacrifice of himſelf upon the croſs.

But as the REDEMPTION, ſo procured, could only operate on each Individual, under certain conditions of FAITH and OBEDIENCE, very repugnant to our corrupt nature, the bleſſed Re-

deemer, on leaving the world, promiſed to his followers his interceſſion with the Father, to ſend amongſt them another divine Perſon ON THE PART OF MAN, namely the HOLY GHOST, called the *Spirit of Truth*, and the *Comforter*; who, agreably to the import of theſe attributes, ſhould co-operate with Man in eſtabliſhing his FAITH, and in perfecting his OBEDIENCE; or, in other words, ſhould *ſanctify him to Redemption.*

This is a ſuccinct account of the Œconomy of Grace; entirely conſonant to our moſt approved conceptions of the Divine nature and of the human condition. For if Man was to be reinſtated in a FREE-GIFT, which had been juſtly forfeited, we cannot but confeſs, that as, on the one hand, the reſtoration might be made on what conditions beſt pleaſed the Giver; ſo, on the other, that God would graciouſly provide that it ſhould not be made in vain.

An Atonement, therefore, for the offended Majeſty of the FATHER, was firſt to be procured; and this was the work of the SON: And then, a remedy was to be provided for that helpleſs condition of Man, which hindered the Atonement from producing its effect; and this was the office of the HOLY GHOST: So that both were joint-workers in the great buſineſs of reconciling God to man.

What at preſent I propoſe to conſider is, the *Office and Operations of the Holy Spirit*, as they are delivered to us in ſacred Scripture.

His office in general is, as hath been observed, to establish our *Faith*, and to perfect our *Obedience:* both of which he doth by ENLIGHTENING THE UNDERSTANDING, and by RECTIFYING THE WILL. All this is necessarily collected from the words of Jesus, which contain this important PROMISE. *I will pray the Father*, (says he) *and he shall give you another* COMFORTER, *that he may abide with you for ever; even the* SPIRIT OF TRUTH——*He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you*——*which is the* HOLY GHOST, *whom the Father shall send in my name. He shall* TEACH YOU ALL THINGS (1).

By *teaching us all things* under the joint characters of the *Spirit of Truth* and of the *Comforter*, we are necessarily to understand *all things* which concern FAITH and OBEDIENCE.

These two distinct branches of his office I shall consider in their order.

CHAP. II.

FIRST of all, let us observe the method employed by divine wisdom in manifesting the operations of the HOLY GHOST, as the SPIRIT AND GUIDE OF TRUTH (2).

The first extraordinary attestation of his Descent was at the day of Pentecost, in the GIFT OF TONGUES.

(1) John xiv. 16. *& seq.* (2) John xvi. 13.

Beſides the great and almoſt indiſpenſable uſe of this endowment on the firſt Diſciples of Chriſt, who were to convey the glad tidings of the Goſpel throughout the whole Earth; the elegance and propriety in the choice of this miracle, to atteſt the real deſcent of that *Spirit* who was to *teach us all things*, can never be enough admired: for WORDS being the human vehicle of our Knowlege, this Gift was the fitteſt precurſor of the *Spirit of Truth*.

But this firſt opening ſcene of wonders, which was to prepare and influence all their ſubſequent labours, a late eminent writer would, from a SIGN, reduce to a *Shadow*; in which he ſeems to think, Fancy ſet itſelf on work, to produce a Prodigy. "The Gift of Tongues upon the "day of Pentecoſt (ſays the learned Perſon) "*was not laſting, but inſtantaneous and tranſitory*; "not beſtowed upon them for the conſtant "work of the miniſtry, but as an *occaſional Sign* "*only*, that the perſon endowed with it was a "choſen miniſter of the goſpel: which Sign, "as ſoon as it had ſerved that particular pur-"poſe, ſeems to have ceaſed, and totally to "have vaniſhed (3)."

Let us examine now, the grounds of this new interpretation, ſo apparently derogatory to the operation of the Holy Spirit.

The learned writer proceeds in order; firſt, to *reduce* the Type or viſible Sign of the Gift,

(3) Dr. *Middleton*'s Eſſay on the Gift of Tongues, Vol. II. of his Works, p. 79.

the

the FIERY TONGUES: for having declared the Gift itſelf to be inſtantaneous and tranſitory, he has, very conſiſtently, endeavoured to ſhew that the *Sign* of it was merely fanciful. He explains it to be no more than a ſudden flaſh of lightening, "which, he ſays, like all other "Phænomena of that ſort, no ſooner appeared, "than vaniſhed (4)."

His reaſon for this opinion is, "becauſe when "the Diſciples ſpoke in ſtrange tongues to the "Multitude, the concluſion they drew from "that circumſtance ſeems to ſhew, that the "celeſtial Fire did not, at that time, ſit upon "their Heads (5)."

But the learned Perſon has omitted to bring this other circumſtance into his account, that when the *cloven Tongues appeared upon each of them*, they were aſſembled together in a private room, ſequeſtered and apart: and that it was not till the thing was *noiſed abroad*, and the *Multitude come together*, to inquire into the truth of it, that the Apoſtles *ſpoke with tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance*. Now between this viſible Deſcent of the Holy Spirit, and their ſpeaking to the Multitude, a conſiderable time muſt have intervened; ſufficient to convince the Apoſtles, from the ſteady duration of the appearance, that it was not natural but miraculous. And this the original words well expreſs: ἐκάθισέ τε ἐφ' ἕνα ἕκαστον αὐτῶν, properly rendered by the Phraſe of SITTING *upon each of them:* Words ſo inconſiſtent with a momentary

(4) P. 81. (5) P. 82.

appearance, that it would be trifling with common ſenſe to deduce ſuch an interpretation from oblique circumſtances and collateral reaſoning. It is true the learned Writer concedes, even from the Sign's being only *a ſudden Flaſh, which vaniſhed almoſt as ſoon as it appeared*, that "it "indicated ſomething miraculous and ſuper-"natural (6)." But I am afraid, that thoſe who are the readieſt to embrace his Phyſiology, will not be the firſt to admire his Theology; eſpecially as it is ſo gratuitouſly deduced. It may therefore not be improper to conſider the evangelical account of this viſible Deſcent, with a little more exactneſs. In this place (we ſee) the *fiery Tongues* are ſaid, *to ſit upon each of them:* and other places of Scripture, which mention the like deſcent of the Holy Spirit in viſible Form, deſcribe it in ſuch terms as denote a very different appearance from a ſudden *Flaſh of Lightening*. St. *Matthew* tells us, that *the Spirit of God deſcended like a Dove*, ὡσεὶ περιστερὰν; that is, with a Dove-like motion; as birds, when about to ſettle upon any thing, firſt hover over it with quivering wings: It then *lighted upon Jeſus*, ἐρχόμενον ἐπ' αὐτὸν. So, in the place in queſtion, the ſame Spirit is ſaid to deſcend under the appearance of *cloven Tongues, like as of Fire*, ὡσεὶ πυρός. In the former inſtance, only the *motion* of the deſcent is deſcribed: in this, both the *motion*, *figure*, and *colour*. And the term of *cloven Tongues*, which the ſacred Hiſtorian employs to deſcribe the *motion*, and which the learned writer takes up, to prove his hypotheſis of a momentary exiſtence of the

(6) P. 82.

phænomenon,

phænomenon, proves it, in truth, to be of ſome continuance. "We cannot (ſays he) think it "ſtrange that fire flaſhing from Heaven, and "ſuddenly vaniſhing, ſhould yield ſome re-"ſemblance of *Tongues* to the eyes of the MULTITUDE; for this is no more than what is "*natural*, and what we may obſerve, in ſome "meaſure, from every flame that flaſhes from "the clouds, and breaks itſelf, *of courſe*, in a "number of ſmall pointed particles not remote "from that ſhape (7)."

To this, let us, in the firſt place, obſerve, that the thing ſeen, ὡσεὶ πυρὸς, on the heads of the Apoſtles, was no more an elementary *fire*, than the thing ſeen ὡσεὶ περιστερὰν, on the head of Jeſus, was a real *dove*: for, as only a *dove-like motion* is intimated in this latter expreſſion, ſo only a *flame-like motion* is intimated in the former; and what this was, the Hiſtorian tells us in its effect, the *appearance of cloven Tongues*. The learned Perſon is certainly miſtaken in ſuppoſing *a ſudden flaſh of lightening* has *naturally* the appearance of cloven Tongues. Such a phænomenon exhibits to the eye of the beholder only a line of light angularly broken into ſeveral directions; very different from the form of *Tongues*, whether whole or *cloven*. Whenever a flame aſſumes this appearance, it is become *ſtationary*, as this was, which, the Hiſtorian ſays, SAT *upon each of them*, ἐκαθίσε: and then its *natural* motion being upwards, it repreſents, when divided lengthwiſe, a pyramidal or *tongue-like* figure, *cloven*. A demon-

(7) P. 82.

ſtration that the Appearance in queſtion was not *momentary*, but of ſome continuance.

The learned Writer having thus accounted for the Precurſor of the gift, comes to conſider the Gift itſelf; and attempts to ſhew that "the "chief or SOLE END RATHER of the *gift of* "*Tongues* was to ſerve as a ſenſible ſign in that "*infirm State* of the firſt Chriſtians, that thoſe "to whom it was vouchſafed were under a di- "vine influence, and acted by a divine com- "miſſion.——So that it is not reaſonable to "think that this *diverſity of Tongues* was given to "the Apoſtles for the ſake of converting thoſe "people before whom they then ſpoke (8)." Hence (ſays he) "it appears that the gift was "not of a ſtable or permanent nature (9)."— That is, it was no laſting endowment, to enable the Apoſtles to perform their Miniſtry amongſt thoſe whoſe language they had never learnt; but, a momentary power which ſerved that day for a *ſign* to the Multitude: and conſequently, they had theſe languages to learn anew when they wanted the uſe of them. This, I ſay, appears to be his inference; for the arguments he brings to ſupport his principle, will lead us to no other. At the ſame time it muſt be obſerved he has laid down the propoſition ſo looſely, and ambiguouſly, that, when conſidered alone, it may either mean, "That the power of ſpeaking ſtrange languages was only infuſed occaſionly, like the power of working miracles;" or elſe, "That the knowlege of the language, when infuſed, was not laſting, but momen-

(8) P. 87. (9) P. 89.

tary,

tary, like the cloven Tongues; the inſpired Linguiſt preſently falling back into his natural ſtate of idiotiſm."

In the firſt ſenſe, the Aſſertion ſeems to be well founded: and from its ſobriety, and more eſpecially from the extravagance of the other meaning, which leaves but little diſtinction between the power of ſpeaking ſtrange Tongues at the day of Pentecoſt, and the extatick ravings of modern Fanaticks, one would wiſh to find was the ſenſe we could fairly aſcribe to it.

But then all the arguments employed by the learned Perſon, for the ſupport of his propoſition, confine us, as we ſhall now ſee, to the other meaning.

1. His firſt argument is the *authority* of ſome modern Critics (1). But I may be excuſed, if I ſuffer theſe to have no more weight with me when they contradict a received interpretation, than they uſually have with him when they confirm it.

2. His ſecond argument is an inference from Scripture itſelf. "It appears (he thinks) from the Stories of Cornelius's family, and the Diſciples at Epheſus (both of whom ſpoke with tongues on the Holy Ghoſt's deſcending on them, while Peter preached to one, and Paul baptiſed the other) that the gift was not laſting but inſtantaneous; and given only for a ſign of their real admiſſion into the Church of

(1) P. 89.

Chriſt :" for, as he truly obſerves, " here was " no room to ſuppoſe another uſe, the ſeve- " ral Aſſemblies being all of the ſame ſpeech " and language (2)."

But here the learned Perſon from particular caſes draws a general inference: becauſe, in this caſe, he *ſees no other uſe* than for a *ſign*, he concludes the gift to be momentary in all other. By a better way of reaſoning therefore, he will ſuffer us to conclude, that where we do *ſee another uſe*, as in the gift at Pentecoſt, that there it was as laſting as the uſe to which it ſerved: And an equitable Judge will conclude for us both, that the ſame endowment which in one inſtance was tranſitory, might, in another, laſt for life.

The Converts of the family of Cornelius, and the Diſciples at Epheſus were in a private ſtation in the Church: ſo that an inſtantaneous exerciſe of the power fully anſwered its end: It was a *ſign* that theſe converts were indeed become members of Chriſt's myſtical body, the Church, as well by the baptiſm of the Spirit as of Water. But the caſe was different with reſpect to the Apoſtles: They were the appointed preachers of the Goſpel to remote and barbarous nations: an office not to be diſcharged without a competent knowlege of the various languages of the Earth. We find them, on the day of Pentecoſt, miraculouſly endowed with this knowlege. What are we to think, but

(2) P. 85, 6.

that

that the PRINCIPAL end of the Gift was to qualify them for their Miſſion ?

3. The learned Writer's third argument in ſupport of his opinion, is taken from the ſtile of Scripture, and is to this purpoſe: "That were the gift of tongues laſting, it would have been employed in the compoſition of their *Goſpels* and *Epiſtles:* But that it was not there employed, appears from the barbarity of the ſtile; ſince whatever comes from God muſt be perfect in its kind; ſo that, in this caſe, we ſhould be ſure to find the purity of Plato, and the eloquence of Cicero:" But the conſideration of this argument coming more properly under another head of this Diſcourſe, for that we ſhall reſerve it; and might here take leave of this ſubject, *the duration of the gift of tongues*; as the common opinion remains unimpaired by his attack, and is ſtill in poſſeſſion of all the circumſtances of credit in which he found it.

CHAP. III.

YET ſince this new interpretation (which makes the gift ſo tranſitory, and the power conferred by it ſo momentary) may be applied by licentious men to purpoſes the learned perſon might never intend, it cannot be too carefully conſidered.

Who hath not heard of the wondrous powers of the imagination, when raiſed and inflamed

by fanaticism? And tho' we be ignorant of its utmost force, yet we know enough of it to convince us, that this faculty of the mind, the Nurse and Parent of Enthusiasm, is able to put on every form of preternatural semblance. There are many well attested cases in modern History, (altho' we should agree that they have lost nothing of the marvellous in the telling) where Enthusiasts, in their extasies, have talked very fluently in the learned languages, of which they had a very imperfect knowlege in their sober intervals. "When I saw (says the noble "author of the *Characteristics)* the Gentleman, "who has writ lately in defence of revived "prophecy, (and has since fallen himself into "the prophetic extasies) lately under an *agita-* "*tion* (as they call it) uttering prophecy in a "pompous latin style, of which out of his ex- "tasy, it seems, he is wholly incapable, it "brought into my mind the latin poet's de- "scription of the Sibyl, &c. (3)" And it is remarkable, that instances of this kind have occurred so frequently, that Thyræus, a famous popish Exorcist, as blinded as he was by the superstitious impiety of demoniacal possessions, has, in his *Directory*, expressly declared it to be the common opinion of his brotherhood, that the *speaking strange languages* is no certain sign of a *possession*, and warns the Exorcist against this illusion (4).

Now were it generally believed that the *speaking with strange tongues* in the first ages

(3) *Letter concerning Enthusiasm*, § 6.
(4) De Dæmoniacis, c. xxii.

of

of Chriſtianity, was a mere fleeting, tranſitory power, the bold licence of our times would be ready to conclude that it was much of the ſame kind with theſe feats of modern Fanatics. For let us conſider how the matter would be thought to ſtand, on the repreſentation of this learned writer: A ſudden flaſh of lightening, under the fancied figure of *cloven-tongues*, kindles the fiery imaginations of a number of enthuſiaſtic men, met together in a tumultuary aſſembly, and inflaming one another's fanaticiſm by mutual colliſion; and in this temper, *they began to ſpeak with tongues as the ſpirit gave them utterance.*

I ſhall therefore endeavour to ſhew, in the laſt place, that this new interpretation contradicts what SCRIPTURE itſelf expreſsly delivers of the USE and, by neceſſary inference, of the *duration* of this *gift of tongues* on the day of Pentecoſt.

The learned writer affirms, "that this knowlege was tranſitory, ſerving only for an occaſional ſign, and not intended for the uſe of the apoſtolic miſſion." Now Jeſus himſelf tells us, that it was intended for this uſe: Who, on his leaving the world, comforts his diſciples with this promiſe:——*But ye ſhall receive* POWER, *after that the Holy Ghoſt is come upon you: and ye ſhall be* WITNESSES *unto me, unto the* UTTERMOST PART OF THE EARTH (5), recorded by the Evangelic writer, as an introduction to his narrative of the miraculous gift of tongues; which he conſiders as the completion of this

(5) Acts i. 8.

promiſe; and that the *power to be received*, was the *power* then given: the uſe of which, as we ſee, was to enable the Diſciples to become *witneſſes unto him, unto the uttermoſt part of the Earth*. We find St. Paul had this *Power*, not only in the fulleſt meaſure, but in a proportionable duration; for, endeavouring to moderate the exceſſive value which the Corinthians ſet upon *ſpiritual gifts*, he obſerves, that, with regard to the moſt ſplendid of them, the *gift of tongues*, he himſelf had the advantage of them all—— *I thank my God* (ſays he) *that I ſpeak with tongues more than you all* (6). The occaſion ſhews that he conſidered this his acquirement as a *ſpiritual gift:* and his uſing the *preſent time*, ſhews that he boaſted of it as then in his poſſeſſion. But why did he ſpeak with more tongues than all of them? For a good reaſon; he was the peculiar Apoſtle of the Gentiles; and was to preach the Goſpel amongſt remote and barbarous nations. Whom then ſhall we believe? Shall we take his word who promiſed the gift; ſhall we take his, on whom it was beſtowed; or ſhall we prefer to both, the conjectures of this learned and ingenious Modern?

Would reaſon or the truth of things ſuffer us to be ſo compliant, we might concede to Unbelievers all which they fancy the learned writer hath procured for them, "that the power of tongues was temporary, and, like the power of healing, poſſeſſed occaſionally," without being alarmed at any conſequence they will be able

(6) c. xiv. ver. 18—μᾶλλον γλώσσαις λαλῶν.

to

to deduce from it. For let it but be granted (and they must grant it, or prevaricate) that the gift of tongues returned as often as they had occasion for it, and it is no great matter where the power resided in the mean time.

But neither reason nor the truth of things will suffer us to be thus compliant. The power of healing or of working miracles (to which the learned writer compares the gift of tongues) is, during the whole course of its operation, one continued arrest or diversion of the general laws of matter and motion: it was therefore fitting that this power should be given occasionally. But the *speaking with tongues*, when once the gift was conferred, became, from thenceforth, a natural power; just as the free and perfect use of the members of the body, after they have been restored, by miracle, to the exercise of their natural functions. Indeed, to have *lost* the gift of tongues after this temporary use of it, would imply another miracle; for it must have been by actual deprivation, unless we suppose the Apostles mere irrational organs through which divine sounds were conveyed. In a word, it was as much in the course of Nature for an Apostle, whom the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, had enabled to speak a strange language, ever afterwards to have the use of that language, as it was for the Cripple, whom Jesus had restored to the use of his limbs on the Sabbath day, ever afterwards to walk, run, and perform all the functions of a man perfectly sound and whole. In one thing, indeed, the power of healing, and of speaking with strange tongues coincided; As the Disciples

ciples could not heal at all times, so neither could they speak at all times in what unknown dialect they should chuse to converse: Yet when once, by the Holy Spirit, they had been enabled to speak and understand a language, they could not but retain the use of it, with the same facility as if they had acquired it in the ordinary way of instruction. But the confusion in this affair, and the learned person's embarras when he states the question, arise from not distinguishing, in these two cases, between the *active power* and the *passive gift*. In healing, the Apostles are to be considered as the workers of a miracle; in speaking strange tongues, as the persons on whom a miracle is performed.

CHAP. IV.

THUS far with regard to this extraordinary descent of the Holy Ghost, as the GUIDE OF TRUTH. And this being as well the FIRST FRUITS as the TYPE and SEAL of all *inspired knowlege*, the sacred Historian thought proper to give us a circumstantial relation of so important an adventure.

The other endowments from the *spirit of truth* he hath mentioned only occasionally. So that had not the Subject of one of St. Paul's Epistles led the writer to enumerate those various Gifts, as they were afterwards distributed amongst the Faithful, we should have had a very imperfect knowlege of their whole extent.

tent. The Church of Corinth was foolishly elated by spiritual pride; which St. Paul endeavoured to mortify and humble: And in applying his remedy, he begins with reckoning up those various graces, the credit of which they had abused, by their indulgence of this unhappy temper—*Concerning spiritual gifts* (says he) *I would not have you ignorant. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit. To one is given by the spirit the* WORD OF WISDOM; *to another, the* WORD OF KNOWLEGE *by the same spirit; to another, the* GIFTS OF HEALING *by the same spirit; to another,* WORKING OF MIRACLES; *to another,* PROPHECY; *to another,* DISCERNING OF SPIRITS (1). And when he comes to apply his premisses, and to shew the inferiority of all these gifts to *Charity*, he recapitulates the most distinguished of them in the following manner:—*tho' I have the gift of* PROPHECY, *and understand all* MYSTERIES, *and all* KNOWLEGE; *and tho' I have all* FAITH *so that I could remove mountains, and have no Charity, I am nothing* (2).

In explaining the nature of these *gifts*, the two passages will afford light to one another.

The first he mentions, is the WORD OF WISDOM (3). By which, I think, we must understand, *all the great principles of natural religion* (4). The ancients used the term in this sense: and we can hardly give it another, in the place be-

(1) 1 Cor. xii. 1. & seq. (2) c. xiii. 2.
(3) Λόγος σοφίας.
(4) In this sense St. Paul uses the word, Col. iv. 5. Ἐν σοφίᾳ περιπατεῖτε πρὸς τοὺς ἔξω.

fore

fore us, where we see it distinguished from the WORD OF KNOWLEGE (5), which follows, and evidently means *all the great principles of the revealed*; the term γνῶσις being as peculiarly applied by Christian writers to *revealed* Religion (6), as σοφία is by the Pagan, to *natural*: and it is no less a generic term than the other, being mentioned in the next chapter, with one of its species,—*all* MYSTERY *and all knowlege*: for *mystery* is that part of *knowlege* which regards the interpretation of such jewish prophesies as concern the *new Dispensation*. In a word, our Apostle speaking, in another place, of Christ, who perfected *Revelation*, built (from its first delivery and rudiments) on *natural Religion*, uses the two terms in these assigned significations.—*In whom* (says he) *are hid all the treasures of* WISDOM *and* KNOWLEGE (7).

(5) Λόγος γνώσεως.

(6) St. Paul uses it in this sense, 2 Cor. xi. 6. Εἰ δὲ καὶ ἰδιώτης τῷ λόγῳ, ἀλλ' οὐ τῇ ΓΝΩΣΕΙ. And St. Peter 1 Ep. iii. 7. Οἱ ἄνδρες ὁμοίως, συνοικοῦντες κατὰ ΓΝΩΣΙΝ. From this term, those early Heretics, who so much deformed the simplicity and purity of the Christian faith by visionary pretences to a superior *knowlege* of Revelation, took their name.

(7) Ἐν ᾧ εἰσὶ πάντες οἱ θησαυροὶ τῆς ΣΟΦΙΑΣ καὶ τῆς ΓΝΩΣΕΩΣ ἀπόκρυφοι. Colos. ii. 3. He uses the word ἀπόκρυφοι, as having in the foregoing verse called this *wisdom and knowlege* τὸ μυστήριον τοῦ Θεοῦ. That the word σοφία is used in the sense here contended for, is plain from his immediately subjoining a warning against vain philosophy, βλέπετε μήτις ὑμᾶς ἔσται ὁ συλαγωγῶν διὰ τῆς φιλοσοφίας, &c. As much as to say, I present you with the treasures of *true* wisdom — οἱ θησαυροὶ τῆς σοφίας—take care that no body deceive you with the *false*.

In

In the recapitulation, FAITH, we see, is reckoned amongst the gifts of the Spirit: and in the following chapter, where these graces are again mentioned, he explains its nature to us, in calling it a *Faith which could remove mountains*, or such a *Faith* as was attended with the power of controlling Nature; alluding to that want, with which Jesus upbraids his Disciples, where he says,—*had ye Faith as a grain of mustard-seed, ye should say unto this mountain, Remove hence into yonder place, and it shall remove* (8).

The two next gifts, of HEALING and WORKING MIRACLES, are two species of the foregoing genus. By *healing* is meant that salutary assistance administered to the sick, in a solemn office of the Church, as directed by St. James (9): and by *working miracles*, a more private and extemporaneous exercise of the same power, tho' less confined in its objects (1).

PROPHECY, which follows, plainly signifies, foretelling the future fortunes of the Church, to

(8) Matt. xvii. 20.

(9) *Is any sick among you? let him call for the Elders of the Church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of Faith* [i. e. the *faith* mentioned just before] *shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.* Jam. Ep. v. 14.

(1) The χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων properly expresses gifts belonging to the Church as such, and ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων implies virtue residing in the individual or particular Agent. Besides we may observe, χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων was a less degree of miraculous power than the ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων, and is expressly intimated so to be *v.* 28.—ἔπειτα δυνάμεις, εἶτα χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων.

the

the comfort and edification (as St. Paul expresses it) of the Assembly. *He that* PROPHESIETH *speaketh unto men to edification and exhortation and comfort* (2). And these effects, generally attending the act of *Prophecy*, in a little time assumed its name (3). But the proper sense of *Prophecy*, and that in which it is to be understood in this place, is the *foretelling things to come*; which Jesus himself declares to be one essential part of the office of the Holy Spirit. *Howbeit, when the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth—and he will* SHEW YOU THINGS TO COME (4).

The last of these gifts, in the order of things, as well as in the Apostle's enumeration of them, is the DISCERNING OF SPIRITS. The reputation attending the exercise of these extraordinary endowments would be a strong temptation to Impostors to mimic and belye their powers; as we see it was in the case of Simon the Magician. It graciously pleased the Holy Spirit, therefore, amidst the bounty of these gifts, to bestow one, whose property it was to bring all the others to the test (5), by the Virtue which the possessor of it had, of distinguishing between true and false Inspiration, where accidental ambiguity or

(2) 1 Cor. xiv. 3.

(3) As Rom. xii. 6.—1 Cor. xiii. 9 —xiv. 1, & 24.

(4) John xvi. 13.—καὶ τὰ ἐρχόμενα ἀναγγελεῖ ὑμῖν.

(5) διακρίσεις πνευμάτων—διάκρισις is used in other places in this signification—μὴ εἰς διακρίσεις διαλογισμῶν, Rom. xiv. 1.—πρὸς διάκρισιν καλοῦ τε καὶ κακοῦ, Heb. v. 14.—πνευμάτων, of *spirits* or divine afflations. And so the Author uses it, a little after, πνεύματα προφητῶν, c. xiv. 32.

designed

deſigned impoſture had made the matter doubtful or ſuſpected.

Theſe gifts, St. Paul tells us, were ſeverally diſtributed amongſt the Faithful. But the Apoſtles themſelves, as Scripture leads us to conclude, had them all in conjunction; exerciſed them in fuller meaſure; ſupported them by additional revelations (6); and (as hath been proved of one of them at leaſt) poſſeſſed them by a more laſting title.

But, for a fuller account of their *nature* and their *uſe*, we muſt have recourſe to SCRIPTURE itſelf, which contains the hiſtory of their various fruits. And as the richeſt of theſe fruits is the INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE itſelf, I ſhall ſelect this for the ſubject of what I have further to ſay of the primitive operations of the Holy Spirit; eſpecially as this hath, in theſe *latter times*, been called in queſtion.

(6) *Now, Brethren, if I come unto you ſpeaking with tongues, what ſhall I profit you, except I ſhall ſpeak unto you either by* REVELATION, *or by knowlege, or by propheſying, or by doctrine.* 1 Cor. xiv. 6. And this additional gift of *Revelation*, which conveyed the further knowlege of God's will in the Goſpel, ſeems properly to have been appropriated to the Apoſtles, with deſign to dignify their office.

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CHAP. V.

WE may obſerve, that the Miniſtry of the Apoſtles conſiſted of theſe two parts; (1.) The temporary and occaſional inſtructions of thoſe Chriſtians whom they had brought to the knowlege of, and faith in, Jeſus, the Meſſiah; (2.) and the care of compoſing a WRITTEN RULE for the direction of the Church throughout all ages. Now it being granted, becauſe, by the hiſtory of *the Acts of the Apoſtles*, it may be proved, that they were divinely inſpired in the diſcharge of the temporary part; it muſt be very ſtrong evidence indeed which can induce an unprejudiced man to ſuſpect, that they were left to themſelves in the execution of the other. Their preaching could only profit their Contemporaries: For inſtructions conveyed to future ages by Tradition are ſoon loſt and forgotten; or, what is worſe, polluted and corrupted with fables. It is reaſonable therefore to think, that the Church was provided with a WRITTEN RULE. The good providence of God hath indeed made this proviſion. And the Scriptures of the New Teſtament have been received by all the Faithful, as divine Oracles, as the inſpired dictates of the Holy Spirit; till Superſtition extending the notion of inſpiration to an extravagant length, over-cautious Believers joined with Libertines, who had taken advantage of the others' folly, to deny or bring in queſtion all inſpiration whatever. For extremes beget each other; and when thus begotten, they are ſuffered, in order to preſerve the balance of the *moral ſyſtem*, as frequently to

to support as to destroy one another; that, while they subsist, each may defeat the mischiefs which the other threatens; and when they fall, both of them may fall together.

I shall therefore take upon me to expose the extravagance of either folly; and then endeavour to settle the TRUE NOTION OF SCRIPTURE INSPIRATION.

1. We have seen how fully gifted the Apostles were for the business of their Mission. They worked Miracles, they spake with Tongues, they explained Mysteries, they interpreted Prophecies, they discerned the true from the false pretences to the Spirit: And all this, for the temporary and occasional discharge of their Ministry. Is it possible then, to suppose them to be deserted by their divine Inlightener when they sat down to the other part of their work; to frame a rule for the lasting service of the Church? Can we believe that that Spirit, which so bountifully assisted them in their Assemblies, had withdrawn himself when they retired to their private Oratories: or that when their *speech* was *with all power*, their *writings* should convey no more than the weak and fallible dictates of human knowlege? To suppose the endowments of the Spirit to be so capriciously bestowed, would make it look more like a mockery than a gift. And, to believe all this would be a harder task than what (the Deist tells us) religious credulity imposes on us. No candid man therefore will be backward to conclude, that what powers the Apostles had for the temporary use of their Ministry, they had,

had, at leaſt in as large a meaſure, for the perpetual ſervice of the Church.

2. St. Paul, where he recommends the ſtudy of the Scriptures of the Old Teſtament, to Timothy, expreſly declares them to be INSPIRED, in that general propoſition, *All Scripture is given by inſpiration of God* (4). Now if in the Moſaic Diſpenſation, the written Rule was *given by inſpiration of God*, where the Church was conducted in every ſtep, at firſt by Oracular reſponſes, and afterwards by a long ſeries and continued ſucceſſion of Prophets; and all this under an *extraordinary* adminiſtration of Providence, ſuch as might well ſeem to ſuperſede the neceſſity of a ſcriptural inſpiration; how confidently may we conclude, that the ſame divine Goodneſs would give the INFALLIBLE GUIDE of an inſpired Scripture to the Chriſtian Church, where the miraculous influence of the Holy Spirit is ſuppoſed to have ceaſed with the Apoſtolic ages, and where the adminiſtration of Providence is only *ordinary?* Nor can it be ſaid, that what St. Paul predicates of *Scripture* muſt be confined to the LAW, (whoſe very name indeed implies inſpiration) and what is prefatory to it; ſince the largeneſs of his terms, *all Scripture*, extends to the whole Canon of the Old Teſtament, as then received by the two Churches. And this general expreſſion was the more expedient, as the *hiſtoric* writings did not either by their nature, like the *Prophetic*, or by their name, like the *Legal*, neceſſarily imply their coming immediately from God. The

(4) 2 Tim. iii. 16.

Canonical

Canonical books of the OLD Teſtament, therefore, being inſpired, Reaſon directs us to expect the ſame quality in the NEW. And, as in the *Old*, amongſt ſeveral occaſional writings, there was the fundamental record, or the GREAT CHARTER of the Pentateuch; and in the Volumes of the Prophets, the Oracular predictions of the future fortunes of the Church to the FIRST coming of the Meſſiah; ſo, in the *New*, there is, beſides the occaſional Epiſtles, the authentic Record or GREAT CHARTER of the Goſpel-Covenant; and in the Revelations of St. John, the ſame divine predictions continued to the SECOND coming of the Saviour of the World.

3. The reaſon of the thing likewiſe ſupports us in concluding for this inſpiration. An univerſal Rule of human conduct implies as unlimited an obedience: the nature of ſuch a Rule requiring it to be received entire; and to be obſerved in every article. But when once it is ſuppoſed to come to us, tho' from Heaven, yet not immediately, but thro' the canal of an uninſpired inſtrument, liable to error both in the receiving and in the diſpenſing of it, men would be perpetually tempted to own juſt as much as, and no more than, they liked to believe, or were diſpoſed to practiſe; and to reject the reſt as a mere human impoſition. Nay the very reaſons which the writers againſt this inſpiration give us, why it is not afforded, ſeem to ſhew the neceſſity why it ſhould: ſuch as the imperfect knowledge that the Apoſtles had of the genius of Chriſtianity; their diſputes and differences with one another; their miſtakes in matters of eaſy prevention, tho' of little conſe-

quence, &c. for if the Compoſers of a *Rule of Faith* for the univerſal Church were thus naturally defective in hiſtoric and religious knowlege, What ſecurity could we have for their not miſleading us in things of moment, unleſs prevented by the guard and guidance of the Holy Spirit, while they engaged themſelves in this important taſk?

I am enough ſenſible of the weakneſs and folly of that kind of reaſoning which concludes from *right* to *fact*; and aſſumes, that becauſe a thing is imagined to be expedient, uſeful, or neceſſary in God's moral Government, that therefore he hath indeed made proviſion for it. Thus the Papal Doctors, in their arguments for the *ſtanding power of Miracles* and the appointment of an *infallible Guide*, having endeavoured to ſhew that the firſt is neceſſary for thoſe *without*, and the ſecond for thoſe *within*, would draw us to conclude with them, that the *true Church* hath, in fact, the exerciſe and uſe of MIRACLES and INFALLIBILITY.

But the caſes are widely different. It is by no means agreed, that the Church, after the Apoſtolic ages, was in the poſſeſſion of ſo large a portion of the Holy Spirit as to enable either this pretended HEAD, or its MEMBERS, to exert the powers in queſtion: Whereas it is confeſſed by all, that at the time theſe Scriptures were written, the Compoſers of them were divinely inſpired for the occaſional work of the Miniſtry: And the only queſtion in diſpute is, Whether that Spirit which aided them in defending the Goſpel before the tribunals of Kings and

and Magiſtrates (5)—in working miracles before the multitude of Unbelievers—and in prophecying and explaining Myſteries to the aſſemblies of the Faithful, whether this Spirit, I ſay, did accompany, or deſert them, when they retired within themſelves, to compoſe a RULE OF FAITH for the perpetual ſervice of the Church?

4. But laſtly, we have the clear teſtimony of Scripture for this inſpiration. And tho' the *bearing witneſs to it ſelf* (6) might be reaſonably objected in an argument addreſſed to Unbelievers, yet being here inforced againſt ſuch of the Faithful who doubt or heſitate concerning the inſpiration of the New Teſtament, it hath all the propriety we can deſire.

I venture therefore to ſay, that St. Paul, in the general propoſition quoted above, which affirms that *all Scripture is given by inſpiration of God* (7), neceſſarily includes the Scriptures in queſtion; what it predicates of *all Scripture* taking in the *new* as well as *old*; as well that which was to be written, as that which was already collected into a Canon. For the term, *Scripture*, as the context leads us to underſtand it, is general, and means, a religious Rule, perfect in its direction, for the conduct of hu-

(5) *And when they bring you unto the Synagogues, and unto Magiſtrates and Powers, take ye no thought how or what thing ye ſhall anſwer, or what ye ſhall ſay: for the Holy Ghoſt ſhall teach you in the ſame hour what ye ought to ſay.* Luke xii. 11, 12.

(6) *If I bear witneſs of myſelf, my witneſs is not true.* John v. 31.

(7) Πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος &c.

man life, in belief and practice: it being under this idea that he recommends the *Scriptures* to Timothy. The assertion therefore is universal, and amounts to this, "That *divine Inspiration* is an essential quality of every *Scripture*, which constitutes the LAW or RULE of a Religion coming from God."

On the whole then, we conclude, that *all the Scriptures of the New Testament were given by inspiration of God.* And thus the prophetic promise of our blessed Master, that the *Comforter should abide with us for ever*, was eminently fulfilled. For tho', according to the promise, his ordinary influence occasionally assists the Faithful of all ages, yet his constant abode and supreme illumination is in the sacred Scriptures of the New Testament (8).

CHAP.

(8) The late Mr. William Law, who obscured a good understanding by the fumes of the rankest enthusiasm, and depraved a sound judgment, still further, by the prejudices he took up against all Sobriety in Religion, seized the above paragraph, as he found it detached from the discourse in a quotation made of it, by an ingenious writer; and thus descants upon it: "Dr. Warburton's doctrine is this, that the inspired books of the New Testament is the Comforter or *spirit of truth and illuminator*, which is meant by Christ's being always with the Church. Let us therefore put the Doctor's doctrine into the letter of the text, which will best shew how true or false it is. Christ saith, *If any man love me, my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* That is, according to the Doctor's theology, certain books of Scripture will come to him, and make their abode with him; for

CHAP. VI.

IT remains only to be conſidered, In what ſenſe we are to underſtand this *inſpiration?*

A ſpurious opinion, begotten in the jewiſh Church by ſuperſtition, and nurſed up by miſtaken piety in the Chriſtian, hath almoſt paſſed into an article of Faith, "That the language of Scripture was dictated by the holy Spirit in

 ſuch

" for he expreſly confineth the *conſtant abode* and " *ſupreme illumination* of God to the holy Scriptures. " Therefore (horrible to ſay) God's inward pre- " ſence, his OPERATING POWER OF LIFE and " light in our ſouls, his dwelling in us, and we in " him, is ſomething of a lower nature, that only may " occaſionally happen, and has leſs of God in it than " the dead letter of Scripture, which alone is the " *conſtant abode* and *ſupreme illumination.* Miſerable " fruits of a paradoxical genius!" —— *A humble, earneſt, and affectionate addreſs to the Clergy*, p. 69-70.

This poor man, whether miſled by his fanaticiſm or his ſpleen, has here fallen into a trap which his folly laid for his malice. In the diſcourſe, from whence the paragraph ſo ſeverely handled is taken, I treated diſtinctly of theſe two branches of the Holy Spirit; 1. As he *illuminates the Underſtanding* under the title of the *Spirit of truth.* 2. As he *rectifies the Will* under the title of the *Comforter:* by the firſt of which, he *eſtabliſhes our faith*; and by the ſecond, he *perfects our obedience.*

Now it is under the firſt branch in which this obnoxious paragraph is found. So that common ſenſe and common honeſty require, that when I ſay, the *conſtant abode and ſupreme illumination of the Holy Spi-*

rit

ſuch ſort that the Writers were but the paſſive organs thro' which every word and letter were conveyed." And as Superſtition ſeldom knows where to ſtop, the Mahometans improved upon this fancy, and repreſented their Scriptures as ſent them down from Heaven ready written. Having got into ſo fair a train, the next theological queſtion in honour of the Alcoran was, whether it was *created* or *uncreated*; and the orthodox determination, we may be ſure, was in favour of the latter. But it was a rabbinical hyperbole, concerning the unvariable reading of the copies of the Law, which ſeems to have given the Mahometan Doctors a hint for this laſt conceit, concerning the phyſical nature of the Alcoran (9).

But there are many objections to that idea of organic inſpiration, which miſtaken piety hath adopted.

rit is in the Sacred Scriptures of the New Teſtament, I ſhould be underſtood to mean, that he is there only as the *illuminator of the underſtanding*, the *eſtabliſher of our faith*. But Mr. Law applies my words to the other branch of his office, as the *rectifier of the Will*, the *perfecter of obedience*; and ſo makes my obſervation nonſenſe in order to arraign it of impiety.

(9) Orobio, ſpeaking the language of the Rabbins, ſays,—Liber Moſis eſt ita perfectus et purus, atque ab erroribus alienus, ab ejus conditore per tot ſecula variis in nationibus ſervatus, ut *cætera naturalia* quæ Deus non corruptioni expoſita *creavit*; ut Cœli, Sol et Aſtra, quæ a ſua formatione non majore Providentia incorrupta, ſervantur et ſubſiſtunt, quam divini legis libri, qui nunquam aliquam mutationem experti fuerunt. *Apud Limb.* p. 147.

1. It

1. It would be putting the holy Spirit on an unneceſſary employment; for much of theſe ſacred Volumes being hiſtorical, and of facts and diſcourſes which had fallen under the obſervation of the Writers, they did not need his immediate aſſiſtance to do this part of their buſineſs for them.

2. Had the Scriptures been written under this organic inſpiration, there muſt have been the moſt perfect agreement amongſt the four Evangeliſts, in every circumſtance of the ſmalleſt fact. But we ſee there is not this perfect agreement. In ſome minute particulars, which regard neither faith nor manners; neither the truth nor certainty of the Hiſtory in general, the ſeveral Writers vary from one another. A variation, which, tho' it diſcredits the notion of an organic inſpiration, yet (which is of much more importance) ſupports the fidelity of the Hiſtorians; as it ſhews that they did not write in concert, or copy from one another; but that each deſcribed the proper impreſſions which the ſame facts had made upon himſelf.

3. Were this the true idea of Scripture-inſpiration, that each Writer was but the mere organ of the Spirit, the phraſeology or turn of expreſſion had been one and the ſame throughout all the ſacred books written in the ſame language: whereas we find it to be very different and various; always correſponding to the conditions, tempers, and capacities of the Writers.

4. Laſtly, the very words of Scripture muſt, in this caſe, have been preſerved, throughout all ages, perfectly pure and free from the corruptions and miſtakes of tranſcribers. For if it were expedient, uſeful and ſorting with the views of divine wiſdom, that every word and letter ſhould be inſpired, it was equally expedient that every word and letter ſhould be preſerved uncorrupt; otherwiſe the holy Spirit would appear to have laboured in vain. Now general experience aſſures us that this is not the caſe: frequent tranſcribing hath occaſioned numerous variations in words and phraſes throughout all the Scriptures of the New Teſtament. But tho' this oppoſes the notion of organic inſpiration, yet the harmleſs nature of the variations, which never diſturb the ſenſe, nor obſcure a ſingle propoſition of Faith, or precept of good manners, affords us a noble inſtance of the gracious providence of God, in bringing down to us thoſe Scriptures, deſtined for an *infallible rule*, incorrupt and entire, in all eſſential and even material points; tho' after eſcaping the impure hands of ſo many outrageous Bigots, ſchiſmatic Viſionaries, and heretical Seducers, they had a long journey ſtill to run, through the dark cloiſters of dreaming Superſtition, and of ignorance but half awake.

From all this we conclude, that the notion of organic inſpiration muſt needs be falſe: and yet we have proved it to be an undoubted truth, that the Scriptures of the New Teſtament were *given by the inſpiration of God*.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

LET us consider then, in what sense this inspiration is to be understood.—From the premises we can deduce no other notion of it but this, "That the Holy Spirit so directed the pens of these Writers that no considerable error should fall from them:—by enlightening them with his immediate influence in all such matters as were necessary for the instruction of the Church, and which, either thro' ignorance or prjeudice, they would otherwise have represented imperfectly, partially, or falsely; and by preserving them by the more ordinary means of providence, from any mistakes of consequence, concerning those things whereof they had acquired a competent knowlege by the common way of information. In a word, by watching over them incessantly; but with so suspended a hand, as permitted the use, and left them to the guidance, of their own faculties, while they kept clear of error; and then only interposing when, without this divine assistance, they would have been in danger of falling."

This seems to be the true idea of the inspiration in question. This only doth agree with all appearances; and will fully answer the purpose of an inspired writing, which is to afford an INFALLIBLE RULE for the direction of the Catholic Church.

But it is not only the nature and genius, the state and condition of Holy Scripture, which

ſupport this idea of inſpiration: The expreſs words of its compoſers lead to the ſame concluſion. St. Peter, ſpeaking of the Epiſtles of his fellow-labourer St. Paul, uſes this temperate expreſſion concerning their inſpiration; he hath written to you, ſays he, *according to the wiſdom given unto him* (1): now, as on the one hand, by the character of this *wiſdom*, which is ſaid to be GIVEN, we muſt conclude it to be *that wiſdom coming immediately from above*; ſo, from this account of the Apoſtle's free uſe of it, who employed it as the regulator of his thoughts and conceptions, we muſt conclude on the other, that there was no inſpiration ruling irreſiſtibly, further than to ſecure the writer from error and miſtake. And the diffidence with which the Apoſtle himſelf ſpeaks, on a certain occaſion (2), concerning his inſpiration, ſhews that it could not be organic, for this ſpecies excludes all doubt and uncertainty concerning its preſence.

But it may be ſaid, that, on this moderated idea of inſpiration, we ſhall never be able to diſtinguiſh which parts were written under the immediate influence of the Spirit, and which were the product of human knowlege only. What if we ſhall not? Where is the miſchief or inconvenience? while all we want to know is, that every ſentence of Scripture, which but remotely concerns either faith or practice, is infallibly true. It is of little conſequence to us to be inſtructed how or in what manner that

(1) ΚΑΤΑ τὴν αὐτῷ ΔΟΘΕΙΣΑΝ σοφίαν——2 Pet. iii. 15.

(2) δοκῶ δὲ κἀγὼ πνεῦμα Θεοῦ ἔχειν. 1 Cor. vii. 40.

truth

truth came to be secured: whether by direct inspiration; or by that virtual superintendence of the Spirit, which preserved the writers of it from error. Scripture is the rule of Christian conduct; and if the rule be known to be unerring, this is all that is wanting to effectuate its end.

And yet I am persuaded, licentious men have been the forwarder to contend for this moderated inspiration, under the idea of a *partial* one, on the pleasing fancy that it would support them in believing no more than suited with their principles or their practice. But, what hath been observed on this head sufficiently exposes the vanity of all such idle contrivances to let men loose from any part of their faith or duty. For, be it admitted that this or that particular doctrine or precept was not delivered under the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit, but was conveyed to posterity, in the common way of history, as the writer received it from his master, yet this takes nothing at all from that certainty of truth which attends directer inspiration; since the rational idea of a *partial* influence implies, that the Spirit so watched over the Authors of the New Testament, and so guided their pens, as to admit no mixture of material error in those parts where they discharged no more than the function of ordinary Historians.

In a word, it imports us little to be solicitous about the Scriptural DELIVERY of Gospel truths; whether they be conveyed to us by means merely human, or by the more powerful workings of the Holy Spirit, so long as we are

assured that divine Providence guarded that delivery from all approach of error. But then let us observe that this is a very different thing from the ORIGINE of the Truths themselves: for on this latter, the reality of our Religion, indeed, depends; the very nature of it consisting in this, that the doctrines which it teacheth be not only Truths SIMPLY, but Truths REVEALED from Heaven. And indeed, even with regard to the *delivery*, when the Writers propose any thing of *faith* or *practice*, explanatory of what their master taught, and not explicitly contained in his words, we must needs conclude, that so far forth they were under the immediate direction of the Holy Spirit, who was *to teach them all things:* and this influence the Apostle calls, *speaking by revelation* (3).

Thus we see the advantages resulting from a PARTIAL INSPIRATION as here contended for and explained. It answers all the ends of a Scripture universally and organically inspired, by producing an UNERRING RULE of Faith and Manners; and besides, *obviates* all those objections to *inspiration* which arise from the too high notion of it: Such as trifling errors in circumstances of small importance; for the least error is inconsistent with organic inspiration, but may well stand with a virtual and cooperating influence: Such again, as the various readings in the several transcripts; and the various styles amongst the several Authors of Scripture; inconsistencies which would never

(3) ἐὰν μὴ ὑμῖν λαλήσω ἐν ΑΠΟΚΑΛΥΨΕΙ. 1 Cor. xiv. 6.

have

have been permitted, and contrarieties which could never have happened, under universal inspiration; but which are the natural and harmless consequences of the PARTIAL.

In a word, by admitting no more than this lower kind of inspiration, so warmly contended for (and in terms as vague and indeterminate as the Scepticism of the users) by men who were in hopes that the admission of it would end in no inspiration at all, we secure and establish the infallible word of Scripture; and free it from all those embarrassing circumstances which have been so artfully and disingenuously thrown out to its discredit.

CHAP. VIII.

BUT there is no idea of an inspired Scripture which libertine men have not perverted to serve their evil purposes. Thus, when their own idea of a *partial inspiration* hath failed in this service, they have tried what mischief that other, of our invention, an *organic inspiration*, was likely to produce. In order to this they have laid it down as a proposition not likely to be contested, "that, on this idea, the work inspired could be no other than a perfect model of eloquence, *pure*, *clear*, *noble and affecting beyond the force of common speech.*" To this, it was thought enough to shew, that their Principle was false; that, in the composition of sacred Scripture, there was *no organic inspiration:*

and

and this, I presume, I have sufficiently performed.

But, luckily for their purpose, there is another circumstance in the dispensation of Grace, which restores their objection, concerning *a perfect model of eloquence*, to its native force. This circumstance therefore is now to be considered; the use made of it, fairly represented; and the proper reasoning applied, to enervate its new recovered force.

The circumstance is this: Several books of the New Testament are written by persons who acquired the knowlege of the Greek tongue by miraculous infusion, as at the day of Pentecost. "Now the Holy Ghost, say they, could not but inspire the purest Greek, and the most perfect eloquence in the use of it; whatever they wrote therefore in any future time, in this language, must needs bear these marks of its celestial birth, whether they were assisted in the composition by the Holy Spirit; or whether they wrote upon the fund of their formerly acquired knowlege. But the language of all the books of the New Testament is utterly rude and barbarous, and savours nothing of so high an original."

The learned Person (whose reasoning against the duration of the inspired knowlege of language on the day of Pentecost, hath been considered above) lends the Libertine these arms, in his concluding argument, in support of that notion; which argument I have reserved to be considered in this place.

"If

" If we allow (says he) the gift to be last-
" ing, we must conclude that some at least of
" the books of Scripture were in this inspired
" Greek. But (says he) we should naturally
" expect to find an inspired language to be such
" as is worthy of God; that is, pure, clear,
" noble, and affecting, even beyond the force
" of common speech; since nothing can come
" from God but what is perfect in its kind.
" In short, the purity of Plato, and the elo-
" quence of Cicero. Now (continues he) if
" we try the apostolic language by this rule,
" we shall be so far from ascribing it to God,
" that we shall scarce think it worthy of Man,
" that is, of the liberal and polite; it being
" utterly rude and barbarous, and abounding
" with every fault that can possibly deform a
" language. And tho' some writers, prompted
" by a false zeal, have attempted to defend the
" purity of the Scripture-Greek, their labour
" has been idly employed (1)."

These triumphant observations are founded on two propositions, both of which he takes for granted, and yet neither of them is true.

1. The one, That an inspired language must needs be a language of perfect eloquence.

2. The other, That eloquence is something congenial and essential to human speech. I shall shew the falsehood of both.

(1) Dr. Middleton's *essay on the gift of tongues.* Works, Vol. II. p. 91.

With

With regard to the firſt propoſition, I will be bold to affirm, that were the STYLE of the New Teſtament exactly ſuch as his very exaggerated account of it would perſuade us to believe, namely, that it *is utterly rude and barbarous, and abounding with every fault that can poſſibly deform a language*, this is ſo far from proving ſuch language not divinely inſpired, that it is one certain mark of this original.

I will not pretend to point out which books of the New Teſtament were or were not compoſed by thoſe who had the Greek tongue thus miraculouſly infuſed into them; but this I will venture to ſay, that the ſtyle of a writer ſo inſpired, who had not (as theſe writers had not) afterwards cultivated his knowlege of the language on the principles of Grecian eloquence, would be preciſely ſuch as we find it in the books of the New Teſtament.

For, if this only be allowed, which no one, I think, will conteſt with me, that a ſtrange language acquired by illiterate men, in the ordinary way, would be full of the idioms of their native tongue, juſt as the Scripture-Greek is obſerved to be full of Syriaſms and Hebraiſms; how can it be pretended, by thoſe who reflect upon the nature of language, that a ſtrange tongue divinely infuſed into illiterate men, like that at the day of Pentecoſt, could have any other properties or conditions?

Let us weigh theſe caſes impartially. Every language conſiſts of two diſtinct parts; the ſingle terms, and the phraſes and idioms. The

firſt,

firſt, as far as concerns appellatives eſpecially, is of mere arbitrary impoſition, tho' on artificial principles common to all men: The ſecond ariſes inſenſibly, but conſtantly, from the manners, cuſtoms, and tempers of thoſe to whom the language is vernacular; and ſo becomes, tho' much leſs arbitrary, (as what the Grammarians call *congruity* is more concerned in this part than in the other) yet various and different as the ſeveral tribes and nations of mankind. The firſt therefore is unrelated to every thing but to the genius of language in general; the ſecond hath an intimate connexion with the faſhions, notions, and opinions of that people only, to whom the language is native.

Let us conſider then the conſtant way which illiterate men take to acquire the knowlege of a foreign tongue. Do they not make it their principal, and, at firſt, their only ſtudy, to treaſure up in their memory the ſignification of the terms? Hence, when they come to talk or write in the ſpeech thus acquired, their language is found to be full of their own native idioms. And thus it will continue, till by long uſe of the ſtrange tongue, and eſpecially by long acquaintance with the owners of it, they have imbibed the particular genius of the language.

Suppoſe then this foreign tongue, inſtead of being thus gradually introduced into the minds of theſe illiterate men, was inſtantaneouſly infuſed into them; the operation (tho' not the very mode of operating) being the ſame, muſt not the effect be the ſame, let the cauſe be never

never ſo different? Without queſtion. The divine impreſſion muſt be made either by fixing the terms or ſingle words only and their ſignification in the memory; as for inſtance, Greek terms correſponding to the Syriac or Hebrew; or elſe, together with that ſimple impreſſion, another muſt be made, to inrich the mind with all the ideas which go towards the compoſing the phraſes and idioms of the language ſo inſpired: But this latter impreſſion ſeems to require, or rather indeed implies, a previous one, of the tempers, faſhions and opinions of the people to whom the language is native, upon the minds of thoſe to whom the language is thus imparted; becauſe the phraſe and idiom ariſes from and is dependent on the manners ariſing from thence: and therefore the force of expreſſion can be underſtood only in proportion to the knowlege of thoſe manners: and underſtood they were to be; the Recipients of this ſpiritual gift being not organical Canals, but rational Diſpenſers. So that this would be a waſte of miracles without a ſufficient cauſe; the Syriac or Hebrew idiom, to which the Diſciples were enabled of themſelves to adapt the words of the Greek or any other language, abundantly ſerving every uſeful purpoſe, all which centered in the communicating of CLEAR INFORMATION. We conclude, therefore, that what was thus inſpired was the TERMS, together with that grammatic congruity in the uſe of them, which is dependant thereon. In a word, to ſuppoſe ſuch kind of inſpired knowlege of *ſtrange tongues* as includes all the native peculiarities, which, if you will, you may call their *elegancies*; (for the more a language is coloured

coloured by the character and manners of the native users, the more elegant it is esteemed) to suppose this, is, as I have said, an ignorant fancy, and repugnant to reason and experience.

Now, from what hath been observed, it follows, that if the style of the New Testament were indeed derived from a language divinely infused as on the day of Pentecost, it must be just such, with regard to its style, which, in fact, we find it to be; that is to say, Greek terms very frequently delivered in Syriac and Hebrew idiom.

The conclusion from the whole is this, that a *nominal* or *local* barbarity of style, (for that this attribute, when applied to style, is no more than nominal or local, will be clearly shewn under our next head) is so far from being an objection to its miraculous acquisition, that it is one mark of such extraordinary original.

But the learned writer is so perfectly satisfied that this *barbarity* of style, which claims the title of inspired, is a sure mark of imposture, that he almost ventures to foretell, it will prove the destruction of those pretensions, as it did to the *Delphic Oracles*. The parallel, he thinks, is a *curiosity*; and so do I; therefore the reader shall have it just as he himself has dressed it up. "It is somewhat *curious* to observe, that there "was a controversy of the same kind amongst "the Ancient Heathens concerning the style "and composition of the *Delphic Oracles*. For "as those Oracles were delivered in verse, and "the verses generally rude and harsh, and of-

"fending

" fending frequently both in the exactneſs " of metre and propriety of language, ſo " men of ſenſe eaſily ſaw that *they could not be* " *inſpired by the Deity:* others, on the contrary, " blinded by their prejudices, or urged by their " zeal, to ſupport the credit of the popular " ſuperſtition, conſtantly maintained, that the " verſes were really beautiful and noble, and " worthy of God; and that the contrary opi- " nion flowed from a falſe delicacy and ſickly " taſte, which reliſhed no poetry, but what " was ſoft and ſweet; and breathing nothing, " as it were, but ſpices and perfumes. The " diſpute however ſeems to have been com- " pounded, and a diſtinction found, in which " all parties acquieſced, by allowing *ſome ſort of* " *inſpiration, and divine authority to the matter* " *of the Oracle*, but leaving all the reſt *to the* " *proper talents and faculties of the Propheteſs:* " who being tired at laſt with the continual " labour of verſifying, began to utter her " Oracles in proſe, till the whole impoſture " fell by degrees into an univerſal contempt, " and ſo finally expired (2)."

A ſad ſtory! But, happily, the eſſential differences between theſe *oracular* pretenſions, and thoſe of the Chriſtian Evangeliſts, (all of which the learned Writer has thought proper to overlook) will eaſe us of our fears; for any one of theſe differences is ſufficient to ſhew, that tho' the objection may hold good againſt the heathen

(2) *Eſſay on the gift of tongues*, Vol. II. of Middleton's Works, p. 91—2.

Oracles,

Oracles, yet it has not the leaſt force againſt Scripture inſpiration.

1. Firſt then the *Delphic Oracles* were ſuppoſed to proceed from the fabled *God of verſe*, who having, according to the popular opinion, inſpired his *Poets* as well as *Prophets*, there was, in the writings of the moſt authentic of the *former*, a model of divine eloquence, on which the pretenſions of the *latter* might be eſtimated. But Scripture inſpiration came profeſſedly from a Deity who had declared that *his thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are our ways his ways. For as the heavens are higher than the earth*, &c. (3)

2. The Delphic Oracles were delivered in *verſe* or *meaſure*; for the compoſition of which, there were eſtabliſhed rules, formed on the writings of the ancient Poets: when therefore this ſpecies of eloquence was employed by the Delphic Propheteſs, if ſhe conformed not to the eſtabliſhed rules, but *offended againſt the metre*, which her own God originally inſpired, ſhe might be fairly adjudged an impoſtor. But the inſpired Penmen diſclaimed all models of human eloquence, and *the enticing words of man's wiſdom*.

3. The Delphic Propheteſs was a *mere organ*, her Prophecies being delivered in a fit of extacy, when the *preſence* of the God was ſuppoſed to obliterate all the impreſſions of human ideas; ſo that every iota was to be placed to the ac-

(3) Iſaiah, lv. 8, 9.

count of the inſpiring God. But it was juſt otherwiſe with ſuch as were actuated by the Holy Spirit: Theſe, in the very moments of inſpiration, ſtill retained the free uſe of themſelves, and continued maſters of their rational and perſuaſive faculties; *the Spirits of the Prophets* (as St. Paul informs us, who ſpoke from his own experience) *were ſubject to the Prophets* (4)! The Pagan Zealots therefore groſly prevaricated, when, to cover the impoſture of the *Delphic Oracle*, they compromiſed the matter with their adverſaries, *by allowing ſome ſort of inſpiration, and divine authority, but leaving all the reſt to the proper talents and faculties of the Propheteſs.* But the Defenders of our holy Religion, when they ſay the ſame thing in defence of ſacred Scripture, do neither prevaricate nor compromiſe; they advance, and they adhere to, a reaſonable and conſiſtent hypotheſis; which, in an examination of the preſent ſtate of the books of the New Teſtament as tranſmitted down to us from the earlieſt antiquity, I have ſhewn to be actually ſupported by fact.

On the whole then, we need not be too much alarmed at the hint which the learned Writer hath here given us, in the fate of the *Delphic Oracles*, tho' never ſo tragically related;——*The Propheteſs tired at laſt with the continual labour of verſifying, began to utter her oracles in* PROSE, *till the whole impoſture fell by degrees into an univerſal contempt, and ſo finally expired*; I ſay we need not be much alarmed at

(4) 1 Cor. xiv. 32.

this

this cataſtrope, becauſe our Oracles hold nothing in common with the *Delphic*; and becauſe the diſgrace brought upon theſe was derived neither from their *bad verſe* nor *barbarous proſe*; but from very different cauſes, which the learned Perſon either did not know, or at leaſt did not care that his Reader ſhould.

In a word, there is but one ſingle mark of reſemblance in all this oſtentatious parallel; and that does not lie between the Pagan and Chriſtian Oracles, but between their Defenders; who, with equal indiſcretion, contended for purity, elegance, and beauty of ſtyle, where in one caſe it was not to be found, tho' pretended to; and in the other, neither pretended to, nor found. The defenders of the *Delphic Oracles*, the learned Perſon thus deſcribes, *that, blinded by their prejudices, or urged by their zeal to ſupport the credit of the popular ſuperſtition, they conſtantly maintained, that the verſes were really beautiful and noble, and worthy of God; and that the contrary opinion flowed from a falſe delicacy, and ſickly taſte, which reliſhed no poetry, but what was ſoft and ſweet, and breathing nothing but ſpices and perfumes.* The Defenders of Scripture eloquence he had before repreſented in the ſame light.—*And tho' ſome Writers, prompted by a falſe Zeal, have attempted to defend the purity of Scripture-Greek, their labours have been idly employed.*

Nothing, indeed, is more certain. Their labours have been very idly employed. One common deluſion has miſled the zealous defenders of all religions on this head, not only the *Pagan* and

and the *Christian*, but, as we have seen, the *Mahometan* likewise. And here let me observe, what is well worth our notice, that that common imbecillity of our nature, which leads the professors of all Religions into the same specific absurdities of the *marvelous*, tho' without imitating one another, has (when blundering on, in the obscure of Superstition, or the blind blaze of Fanaticism) generally been more successful in the support of false Religion than of the true. Of this I have occasionally given divers instances elsewhere. One of them, which I just now chanced to mention, will deserve to be explained. The Mahometan Doctors were (with their Master) under this common delusion, that an inspired writing must needs be a perfect model of eloquence. And they succeeded better than the Christian; for they had advantages which our zealots had not. For first, Mahomet himself delivered the Alcoran to his followers under this character; and defied the Masters of human eloquence to equal it; whereas the writers of holy Scripture disclaim all these fantastic advantages. Secondly, when Mahomet retailed his Alcoran, there was no acknowleged model of Arabic eloquence; but when the books of the New Testament were composed, there were many, and of the highest authority; so that those bold pretensions easily obtained, and soon smoothed the way for its actually becoming such a model. Lastly, Enthusiasm, which had just done much greater things, easily induced the Saracens to believe, that they saw what their Prophet so confidently objected to their admiration, an all-perfect model of eloquence in the Chapters of the Alcoran. And

they

they believed ſo long till the book became in fact, what at firſt they had only fancied it, as real and ſubſtantial a pattern of eloquence as any whatſoever; a paradox, which, like many others that I have had the odd fortune to advance, will preſently be ſeen to be only another name for Truth. But here in the North-weſt, our enthuſiaſm is neither ſo exalted, nor our habits ſo conſtant. We have neither the knack of perſuading ourſelves ſo readily, nor the humour of ſticking to a faſhion, ſo obſtinately.

However fooliſh then our *falſe Zealots have ſhown themſelves in attempting to defend the purity of the Scripture Greek*, it little became the learned Writer, of all men, to make them the ſubject of his deriſion; ſince the *ſame falſe principle*, which betrayed them into one extreme, hath miſled him into another. The principle I mean, (and it has miſled many beſides) is that which lays it down for truth, *That an inſpired Scripture muſt be a model of perfect eloquence.*

CHAP. IX.

THIS brings us to the learned Writer's *ſecond* propoſition, which I promiſed to examine; and on which the principle, here delivered, is founded. It is this,

2. That eloquence is ſomething congenial and eſſential to human ſpeech; and inherent in the conſtitution of things.

This ſuppoſes, that there is ſome certain ARCHETYPE in nature, to which that quality refers, and on which it is to be formed and modeled. And, indeed, admitting this to be the caſe, one ſhould be apt enough to conclude, that when the Author of Nature condeſcended to inſpire one of theſe plaſtic performances of human art, he would make it by the exacteſt pattern of the *Archetype*.

But the propoſition is fanciful and falſe. Eloquence is not congenial or eſſential to human ſpeech, nor is there any Archetype in nature to which that quality refers. It is accidental and arbitrary, and depends on cuſtom and faſhion: It is a mode of human communication which changes with the changing climates of the Earth; and is as various and unſtable as the genius, temper, and manners of its diverſified inhabitants. For what is PURITY but the uſe of ſuch terms, with their multiplied combinations, as the intereſt, the complexion, or the caprice of a Writer or Speaker of Authority hath preferred to its equals? What is ELEGANCE but ſuch a turn of idiom as a faſhionable fancy hath brought into repute? And what is SUBLIMITY but the application of ſuch images, as arbitrary or caſual connexions, rather than their own native grandeur, have dignified and ennobled? Now ELOQUENCE is a compound of theſe three qualities of Speech, and conſequently muſt be as nominal and unſubſtantial as its Conſtituent

Conſtituent parts. So that, that mode of compoſition, which is a model of *perfect eloquence* to one nation or people, muſt appear extravagant or mean to another. And thus in fact it was. Indian and Aſiatic Eloquence were eſteemed hyperbolic, unnatural, abrupt and puerile to the more phlegmatic inhabitants of Rome and Athens. And the Weſtern Eloquence, in its turn, appeared nerveleſs and effeminate, frigid or inſipid to the hardy and inflamed imaginations of the Eaſt. Nay, what is more, each ſpecies, even of the moſt approved genus, chang'd its nature with the change of clime and language; and the ſame expreſſion, which, in one place, had the utmoſt *ſimplicity*, had, in another, the utmoſt *ſublime*.

Longinus reading theſe words in the Septuagint, *God ſaid, Let there be light, and there was light*, and regulating his ideas on the genius of his own language, very acutely gave them as an example of the *ſublime*. We may be ſure the judgment of ſo accompliſhed a Critic, would be eagerly laid hold on by our Doctor's *zealous Divines*, to exalt the credit of Moſes's elocution. Indeed, the ſublime introduction to the book of Geneſis paſſed, for a long time, unqueſtioned. At length Huetius and Le Clerc, more carefully attending to the original text, diſcovered that the words were ſo far from being *ſublime*, that they were of the utmoſt *ſimplicity*; and each of theſe Critics compoſed a long diſſertation to ſupport his opinion. So far was well; but not content with what they had done, they would needs prove that Longinus was miſtaken in his criticiſm of the Greek. This provoked

the Poet Boileau, who had juſt tranſlated that celebrated work, to ſupport his Author's judgment; and (as he was in the ſame deluſion with his adverſaries) he did it by endeavouring to prove the ſublime of the original expreſſion. This furniſhed matter for anſwers and replies in abundance: Whereas, had the diſputants but reflected, that the ſame expreſſion, which in one language was highly *ſublime*, might, in another, be extremely *ſimple*, the judgment of the Greek critic would have been confeſſed by Huetius and Le Clerc, and the biblical knowlege of theſe two learned Interpreters allowed of by Boileau. As the reaſon of all this ſerves to illuſtrate what is here advanced concerning *the nature of eloquence*, I ſhall endeavour to explain it. The ideas ariſing from the knowlege of the true God, and his attributes, were familiar to Moſes; and whenever ideas are familiar they raiſe no emotion; conſequently the expreſſion of ſuch ideas will naturally be cold and ſimple. There is the utmoſt ſimplicity in the words—*God ſaid, Let there be light, and there was light:* And nothing but their ſimplicity would be ſeen or felt by a Jewiſh Reader, to whom the ſame religious ideas were equally familiar. But let a Greek, brought up and educated in the groveling and puerile notions which his national Theology produced and ſupported, let ſuch a one, I ſay, raiſe himſelf with pain, by the ſtrong effort of a ſuperior genius,

"To the firſt Good, firſt Perfect, and firſt Fair,"

the new ideas, with which his mind is warmed and enlarged by the knowlege of the true God and

and his Attributes, naturally produce admiration; and admiration in a Genius, is the parent of *ſublime* expreſſion. So that when the ſubject is Creation, his point will be to convey the higheſt idea of Omnipotence: but the effect of divine power, immediately following its volition, gives that higheſt idea: therefore, in the midſt of his ſublime conceptions, he will hardly think of any other words to convey them than—*God ſaid, Let there be light, and there was light.* And every Greek Reader, to whom the ideas of true Theology were as novel and unfamiliar as they were to the Writer, would naturally eſteem that expreſſion, which ſo graphically deſcribes the inſtantaneous production of Omnipotence, to be infinitely SUBLIME.

Apply all this to the Books of the NEW TESTAMENT, an authoriſed collection, profeſſedly deſigned for the rule and direction of mankind. Now ſuch a rule demanded that it ſhould be inſpired of God. But inſpired writing, the Objectors ſay, implies the moſt *perfect eloquence.* What human model then was the Holy Ghoſt to follow? And a human model, of arbitrary conſtruction, it muſt needs be, becauſe there was no other: Or if there were another, it would never ſuit the purpoſe, which was to make an impreſſion on the minds and affections; and this impreſſion, ſuch an eloquence only as that which had gained the popular ear, could effect. Should therefore the *eaſtern* eloquence be employed? But this would be too inflated and gigantic for the *Weſt.* Should it be the *weſtern?* But this would be too cold and torpid for the *Eaſt.* Or ſuppoſe the *generic* elo-

quence of the more polished Nations was to be preferred, Which *species* of it was to be employed? The rich exuberance of the Asiatic Greeks, or the dry conciseness of the Spartans? The pure and poignant ease and flowing sweetness of the Attic modulation, or the strength and grave severity of the Roman tone? Or should all give way to that African torrent, which arose from the fermented mixture of the dregs of Greece and Italy, and soon after overflowed the Church with theological conceits in a sparkling luxuriancy of thought, and a sombrous rankness of expression? Thus various were the species's! all as much decried by a different Genus, and each as much disliked by a different Species, as the eloquence of the remotest East and West, by one another.

But it will be said, Are there not some more substantial principles of eloquence, common to all?—Without doubt, there are.—Why then should not these have been employed, to do credit to the Apostolic inspiration? For good reasons: respecting both the Speaker and the Hearers. For what *is* eloquence but a persuasive turn given to the elocution to supply that inward, that conscious persuasion of the Speaker, so necessary to gain a fair hearing? But the first Preachers of the Gospel did not need a succedaneum to that inward conscious persuasion! And what is the *end* of eloquence, even when it extends no further than to those more general principles, but to stifle reason, and inflame the passions? But the propagation of Christian Truths indispensably requires the aid of Reason, and requires no other human aid. And Reason

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can never be fairly and vigorously exerted but in that favourable interval which precedes the appeal to the Passions. These were the causes which forced the Masters of eloquence to confess, that the utmost perfection of their art consists in keeping it concealed; for that the ostentation of it seemed to indicate the absence of Truth,—*Ubicunque ars ostendatur*, says the most candid and able of them all, *veritas abesse videatur* (1). Hence so many various precepts to make their most artificial periods appear artless. Now surely that was a very suspicious instrument for Heaven-directed Men, which, to preserve its credit, must pretend absence, and labour to keep out of sight.

What, therefore, do our ideas of fit and right tell us is required in the *Style* of an universal Law? Certainly no more than this—To employ those aids which are common to *all* Language as such; and to reject what is peculiar to *each*, as they are casually circumstanced. And what are these aids but CLEARNESS and PRECISION? By these, the mind and sentiments of the Composer are intelligibly conveyed to the Reader. These qualities are essential to language, as it is distinguished from jargon: they are eternally the same, and independent on custom or fashion. To give a language *clearness* was the office of Philosophy; to give it *precision* was the office of Grammar. Definition performs the first service by a resolution of the ideas which make up the terms; Syntaxis performs the second by a combination of the seve-

(1) Quint. l. ix. c. 3.

ral parts of ſpeech into a ſyſtematic congruity: theſe are the very things in language which are leaſt poſitive, as being conducted on the principles of Metaphyſics and Logic. Whereas, all beſides, from the very power of the elements, and ſignification of the terms, to the tropes and figures of Compoſition, are arbitrary; and, what is more, as theſe are a deviation from thoſe principles of Metaphyſics and Logic, they are frequently vicious. This, the great Maſter, quoted above, freely confeſſeth, where ſpeaking of that ornamented ſpeech, which he calls σχήματα λέξεως, he makes the following confeſſion and apology—"effet enim omne Schema "VITIUM, ſi non peteretur, ſed accideret. "Verum auctoritate, vetuſtate, conſuetudine, "plerumque defenditur, ſæpe etiam RATIONE "QUADAM. Ideoque cum ſit a ſimplici rec-"toque loquendi genere deflexa, *virtus* eſt, ſi "habet PROBABILE ALIQUID quod ſequa-"tur (2)."

Now theſe qualities of *clearneſs* and *preciſion*, ſo neceſſary to the communication of our ideas, eminently diſtinguiſh the Writers of the New Teſtament; inſomuch that it might be eaſily ſhewn, that whatever difficulties occur in the ſacred Volumes, they do not ariſe from any imperfection in the mode of conveying their ideas, occaſioned by this local or nominal *barbarity of Style*; but either from the ſublime or obſcure nature of the things conveyed to the Reader by words; or from the purpoſed conciſeneſs of the Writer; who, in the occaſional mention of any

(2) Quint. *l.* ix. c. 3.

matter

matter unrelated, or not eſſential, to the Diſpenſation, always affects a ſtudied brevity.

But further; Suppoſe that, in ſome caſes, an authentic Scripture, deſigned for a religious rule, demanded this quality of local eloquence; (for that, in general, it is not required, I have fully ſhewn above) let this, I ſay, be ſuppoſed, yet ſtill it would not affect the caſe in hand, ſince it would be altogether unſuitable to the peculiar genius of the GOSPEL. It might eaſily be known to have been the purpoſe of Providence, (tho' ſuch purpoſe had not been expreſly declared) that the Goſpel ſhould bear all the ſubſtantial marks of it's divine Original; as well in the circumſtances of it's promulgation, as in the courſe of it's progreſs. To this end, the appointed Miniſters of it's conveyance were perſons, mean and illiterate, and choſen from amongſt the loweſt of the people; that when Sceptics and Unbelievers ſaw the world converted by the *fooliſhneſs of preaching*, as the learned Apoſtle, in great humility, thinks fit to call it, they might have no pretence to aſcribe the ſucceſs, to the parts, the ſtation, or the authority of the Preachers. Now had the language, infuſed into theſe illiterate men, been the ſublime of Plato, or the eloquence of Tully, Providence would have appeared to counteract it's own meaſures, and defeat the purpoſe beſt calculated to advance it's glory. But *God is wiſe, tho' man's a fool.* And the courſe of his Wiſdom was here, as every where elſe, uniform and conſtant. It not only choſe the weakeſt Miniſters of his Will, but kept out of their hands that powerful weapon of *contorted*

Words, which their Adverſaries might ſo eaſily have wreſted to the diſhonour of the Goſpel. So much was Dr. Middleton miſtaken, when beſides *clearneſs*, (which he might be allowed to expect) he ſuppoſes *purity*, *nobleneſs*, and pathetic *affection* to be qualities inſeparable from an inſpired writing. St. Paul, who, amongſt theſe ſimple Inſtruments, was, for the ſame wiſe purpoſes, made an exception to the general choice, yet induſtriouſly profecuted that ſublime view, for the ſake of which the choice was made; by rejecting all other weapons but thoſe of the Spirit, to ſpread abroad the Conqueſts of the Son of God. *My ſpeech* (ſays he) *and my preaching was not with inticing words of man's wiſdom, but in the demonſtration of the Spirit and of Power.* As much as to ſay, "My ſucceſs was not owing to the ſophiſtical eloquence of Rhetoricians, but to the ſupernatural powers, with which I was endowed, of interpreting Prophecies and working Miracles." He ſubjoins the reaſon of his uſe of theſe means—*that their faith ſhould not ſtand in the wiſdom of men, but in the power of God.* i. e. Be converted not by force of Philoſophy and Eloquence, but of the ſupernatural gifts of the Spirit: *Therefore* (ſaith he again) *God hath choſen the fooliſh things of the World to confound the wiſe; and the weak things of the World to confound the mighty* (3). And leſt it ſhould be ſaid, that this was an affectation of deſpiſing advantages which they themſelves could not reach, it pleaſed Providence that this declaration ſhould be made, not by one of the more ſordid and idiotic of the

(3) 1 Cor. ii. 4.

number;

number; but by Him, to whom both nature and discipline had given powers to equal even the heights of Greek and Roman elocution. For we see, by what now and then accidentally flames out in the fervor of his reasoning, that he had a strong and clear discernment, a quick and lively imagination, and an extensive and intimate acquaintance with those Masters in moral painting, the Greek Sophists and Philosophers: all which he proudly sacrificed to the glory of the *everlasting Gospel*. Nor does he appear to have been conscious of any inconsistency between an *inspired language* and it's *local barbarity of style*: For having had occasion, in this very Epistle, to remind the Corinthians of the abundance of spiritual grace bestowed upon him, he says, *I thank my God, I speak with tongues more than you all* (4); and yet he tells them that he is *rude in speech* (5). Which apparent inconsistency the reader may accept, if he pleases, for a further proof of the truth of what has been above delivered, concerning the natural condition of an inspired language.

Thus we see, how unsuitable this quality of *local* eloquence would be to the peculiar genius of the Gospel. Yet as there is, in the Old Testament, much of this ornament of style, and more imagined, it may not be improper to explain the reason of this diversity, and shew how consistent the use of it is, in those places, with the principles already laid down.

(4) 1 Cor. xiv. 18. (5) 2 Cor. xi. 6.

1. First, then, we may observe that Judaism was not an *universal* Religion, but instituted for the use of a single people; so that none of the inconveniencies mentioned above of a *local eloquence*, could arise from the use of it, in that Religion.

2. The Jewish Religion had a *public part* (6); and consequently abounded in such Rites and Ceremonies, to which, an ornamented style was well adapted.

3. The subjects of several of the Books of the Old Testament are in their nature *poetical*, several *rhetorical*, and so seem to have demanded a Style suitable to their genius.

CHAP. X.

AND now enough hath been said to make a just estimate of the value of those objections which two celebrated Writers (1) have inforced, with all their art and address, against the inspiration of the New Testament, from it's local barbarity of style. Dr. Middleton's objection hath been considered already. I shall chuse to close this first part of my discourse with an examination of that still more ingenious objection of the noble Author of the CHARACTERISTICS; who hath employed all the powers

(6) See Div. Leg. Book V.
(1) Dr. Middleton and Lord Shaftsbury.

of

of his wit and eloquence to expose the want of these qualities in the sacred Volumes.

——" It is NO OTHERWISE (says his Lord-" ship) in the grammatical art of Characters " and PAINTED SPEECH than in the art of " painting itself. I have seen, in certain " Christian Churches, an ancient piece or two, " affirmed, on the solemn faith of priestly tra-" dition, to have been *angelically* and divinely " wrought by a supernatural hand and sacred " pencil. Had the piece happened to be of a " hand like Raphael's I could have found no-" thing certain to oppose to the tradition. But " having observed the whole STYLE and man-" ner of the pretended heavenly workmanship, " to be so indifferent as to vary, in many par-" ticulars, from the *truth of art*, I presumed, " within myself, to beg pardon of the tradi-" tion, and assert *confidently*, that *if the pencil* " *had been heaven-guided it could never have been* " *so lame in it's performance:* it being a mere " contradiction to all divine and moral truth, " that a *celestial hand*, submitting itself to the " rudiments of a human art, should sin against " the art itself, and express falsehood and error " instead of justness and proportion (2)."

This tale of *St. Luke's painting*, like the story of the DELPHIC ORACLES, needs no application. Every one sees that it is given to discredit the inspiration of holy Scripture. But as *confidently* as his Lordship says, he draws his conclusions from it, he gives them no other support

(2) *Charact.* viii. p. 230.

than

than this miſtaken conceit, which he erects into an axiom: *That it is no otherwiſe in the grammatical art of characters and painted ſpeech than in the art of painting itſelf:* or, in other words, that the *painted ſpeech of Characters* which repreſent ideas, and the *painted images of things* are performances of the ſame kind. Now, in examining their natures by the principles of human ſpeech, before laid down and explained, it appears that they are of very different kinds, having nothing in common but the office of giving information, *truly* and *clearly*; one of them by repreſenting the images of corporeal things; the other by repreſenting the incorporeal ideas of the ſpeaker's or writer's mind. And what thing is there, in art or nature, which does not hold ſomething in common with another? But the difference between *theſe* is indeed no leſs than between things NATURAL and things POSITIVE, between conſtitutional and arbitrary; *painting* being IMITATION, and WORDS only SYMBOLS. The ſubject of the *firſt*, conſtant, unvariable, neceſſary; as having it's archetype in nature: the other unſtable, ſhifting and capricious, as depending for it's exiſtence on the human will, under the direction of fancy and caprice. In PAINTING there is, properly ſpeaking, but *one true ſtyle*, and that is an exact imitation of nature. In SPEECH there are as many true ſtyles as there are tempers and humours, cuſtoms and faſhions amongſt men. Eloquence, *or truth of ſtyle*, in ſpeaking or writing, being nothing elſe but the adapting the terms of human ſpeech to the various conceptions, fancies, and affections of the hearers; ſo that, as in *painting* there is but one true ſtyle,

and

and that REAL, becauſe an imitation of nature; in *ſpeech* there are many true ſtyles, but all FANTASTIC, becauſe all are the creatures of arbitrary faſhion.

The noble Author himſelf ſeemed to ſuſpect that theſe two things had but a ſlender connexion in *nature*, and therefore endeavoured to ſtrengthen the tie by *art*. Hence his figurative expreſſions of PAINTED SPEECH, for *writing*, in order to clap up a forced alliance between writing and painting; and, on the contrary, STYLE, for manner of painting, to bring painting and writing related. A favourable Critic may poſſibly ſay, that the noble Writer had no other purpoſe, in the uſe of theſe elegant figures, than to ornament his language. Perhaps not. It is then only a remarkable example of the truth of an obſervation made above: "that the principal end of eloquence, as it is employed in human affairs, is to miſlead reaſon, and to cajole the fancy and affections."

On the whole then, All the concluſion we can reaſonably draw from this noble Author's remarks on HEAVENLY WORKMANSHIP in *painting* and in *ſpeech*, is only this, That if an inſpired Painter were to give us a Picture, it would indeed equal or excel the pencil of Raphael; becauſe here was a *real Archetype* to work by, that is to ſay, NATURE: But, if we may credit Reaſon, whoſe dictates, I am ſorry to ſay, are not always thoſe of his Lordſhip, an inſpired Writer would receive no more aſſiſtance from Heaven in his expreſſion, than what was neceſſary to give his ſpeech the eſſential quali-

ties of all language, namely, CLEARNESS and PRECISION; becauſe here was no *real archetype* to follow; the various modes of eloquence being moſtly fantaſtic, as exiſting only in capricious cuſtom; and therefore unworthy the notice of a divine Inſpirer.

I have now gone thro' the firſt part of my Diſcourſe; which propoſed to conſider the Office and Operations of the Holy Spirit as THE GUIDE OF TRUTH, who clears and enlightens the Underſtanding. In this part, I have endeavoured to vindicate his firſt Deſcent and his inſpiration of holy Scripture; I have diſtinguiſhed the mode of that inſpiration; I have explained the character of an inſpired language; I have inquired into the nature of human eloquence, and have carefully examined the force of our free Reaſoners, on every one of theſe diſtinct heads.

BOOK II.

CHAP. I.

I NOW proceed to the second branch of my Discourse, which is, to consider the Holy Spirit under the idea of THE COMFORTER, who purifies and supports the Will.

And here, his divine power manifested itself in the same miraculous Operations. Sacred Antiquity is very large and full in its accounts of the sudden and entire change made by the Holy Spirit, in the dispositions and manners of those whom it had enlightened; instantaneously effacing all their evil habits, and familiarizing their practice to the performance of every virtuous and pious action.

To this illustrious and triumphant conviction of the truth of Christianity, the very enemies and persecutors of our holy Faith have been forced to bear witness: not only in the serious accounts which some (1) of them have given of the innocence and virtue of PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY; but even in the mockery and ridicule of others (2), on the subject of the boasted virtue of water-baptism; which was then commonly accompanied with, and sometimes preceded by, these extraordinary effusions of grace from the *Comforter*. "Come here (say these

(1) Pliny the younger, Suetonius, Tacitus, &c.
(2) Celsus, Julian, &c.

unhappy

unhappy Libertines) and see the amazing efficacy of Christian-baptism! whoever is immerged in this water, tho' before, he were an adulterer, a practised thief or murderer, rises cleansed and purified from all his crimes; and commences, on the instant, a life of temperance, of justice, and of charity." Thus did these impious scorners endeavour to disguise their chagrin at the triumphs of the Spirit, over Vice and Paganism, by a sarcastic parody of the grateful exultations of the Christian Pastors. In truth, it was all they had to say; for, after this, they were reduced to seek a forced consolation, in the possibility that some NATURAL CAUSE had produced so extraordinary a phænomenon.

It may be worth while, therefore, to enquire whether any such cause can be reasonably assigned.

The enemies of our Faith hope to find it in FANATICISM, and SUPERSTITION, the two Passions which the strong impression of a *new* Religion begets, by it's HOPES and FEARS, on the mind of man.

Let us see, whether either, or both of these, will account for so *sudden* and *lasting* a conversion, from vice and corruption, to a life of sanctity and virtue.

SUPERSTITION, which only depraves the Reason without making any impression on those faculties of the mind that most incline the Will to a new bias, never effects any considerable change

change in the MANNERS. It's utmoſt force is but juſt enough to perſuade us, that an exact attention to the officious ceremonies of Religion will be of force to ſecure us from the evils denounced againſt vice and immorality; or, at leaſt, that ſome tranſient acts of penitence, as the approaches of Death alarm us, will be ſufficient to entitle us to the reward of a pure and well-ſpent Life.

FANATICISM, indeed, ſhakes and agitates the mind with greater violence: and by inſtigating thoſe faculties which moſt influence the Will, frequently forces the Manners from their bent; and ſometimes effaces, or obſcures, the ſtrongeſt impreſſions of cuſtom and nature. But this extraordinary fervour, tho' always violent, is rarely laſting: never ſo long as to turn the new Syſtem into a habit. So that when its rage ſubſides, as it very ſoon does, but where it drives the unhappy victim into downright madneſs, the late impreſſed bias on the Will keeps abating, till all the former habitudes recover their relaxed tone.

This is confirmed, not only by the general Hiſtory of paſt Fanaticiſm, but likewiſe of the preſent, where we commonly ſee the final iſſue of a ſudden converſion to be, either a return to an open profligacy of manners, or a deep hypocritical diſſimulation of them.

But now if we look into the hiſtory of thoſe early Converts, we ſhall find that their Virtue, from the very firſt impreſſion of it, had all the eaſe, ſobriety, and moderation of a ſettled habit:

in

in this they persevered; and adding *grace to grace*, they went on, thro' life, in one constant tenor, from the first baptismal profession of their Faith by water, to the last awful confirmation of it in their blood. A dreadful period! when Nature, by the very shock, and in the struggle, it then suffers, becomes enabled to dissipate all the fumes of *mental*, as it is frequently observed to do, of *corporeal* intoxication. This it did, in the famous case of the virtuous SAVANAROLA of Florence; whose story is so finely told by Guicciardini in the second and third books of his History. This Man, a genuine Fanatic, if ever there were any, had assumed the personage of a Prophet and inspired Preacher. A Character which he had long and successfully sustained; taken up amidst the distresses and distractions of his Country, and, without doubt, occasioned by them. But losing his credit in the new Revolutions of Italy, and being brought by his enemies to the stake, he died, after having disavowed his pretensions, on the rack, he died, I say, sullen and silent, without any remaining symptom of his former Enthusiasm.

Nor could this sudden conversion of the first Christians be the effect of MERE rational conviction. We know it to be morally impossible for Reason, however refined and strengthened by true Philosophy, to root out, on the instant, the inveterate habits of Vice. All that this magisterial Faculty can do is, by constantly repeating her dictates, and inforcing her conclusions, gradually to win over the Will; till, by little and little, the mind accustoms itself to another set of ideas, productive of other practices

tices and other habits. A work of time and labour! as thoſe good men have ſufficiently experienced, who, on a mere rational conviction, have attempted and perfected a change in their lives and manners. When therefore we ſee the deepeſt impreſſions of evil cuſtom, and the darkeſt ſtains of corrupted nature thus ſuddenly wiped out and effaced, To what muſt we aſcribe ſo total a reform but to the all-powerful operation of Grace?

But it may be objected, "That there are inſtances where Enthuſiaſm alone hath kept men ſteady in the practice of that virtue which a certain fanatic turn of mind firſt recommended." Doubtleſs there have been many good people, who either thro' the weakneſs of their reaſon, or the force of their more refined paſſions, have been hurried into fanatic fervours, which have ſupported and confirmed them in their previous innocence of manners. But even here we have ſufficient marks to diſtinguiſh theſe better ſorts of Enthuſiaſts, from ſuch of the firſt chriſtian Confeſſors, who were in the happy circumſtance of being *found* innocent, when they were led into the practice of all virtue by the Holy Spirit: whoſe office, as we have ſaid, conſiſted in this gracious combination, To enlighten the underſtanding, and to rectify the will. Now, that genial ſplendour which conducted the firſt Chriſtians into the knowlege of *all truth*, ſufficiently diſcloſed the divine Inſpirer of *all righteouſneſs*. But we ſee none of that *ſhining light* ordained and employed to gild the *good works* of Grace, in the morals of innocent Enthuſiaſts. On the contrary, we often

often find a more than ordinary ignorance; and sometimes, even an incapacity of making rational conclusions.

Thus was the first part of the promise to *send the* COMFORTER, fulfilled.

CHAP. II.

THE other part, that HE SHOULD ABIDE WITH US FOR EVER, comes next to be considered. We have observed how this likewise hath been verified by the sure deposite of the *Spirit of Truth* in sacred Scripture. Yet this is not the whole of the completion. His present influence, together with the fruits of the past, make the entire subject of the promise. Hence we conclude that he abides with *the Church for ever* as well PERSONALLY in his office of *Comforter*, in supporting the Will, as VIRTUALLY in his office of *Enlightener*, in directing the Understanding.

The only question will be, Whether, from the primitive ages down to these latter times, he hath continued to exercise either part of his office in the same extraordinary manner in which he entered upon it, when his descent on the Apostles was accompanied with all the sensible marks of the Divinity.

And this, as it tends to the decision of more than one important question (not only the superstitious

ſtitious claim of CHURCH-MIRACLES, but the fanatic pretences to DIVINE INFLUENCES) ſhould be conſidered more at large.

But here, I ſhall venture to invert the method of thoſe Divines, who, in their inquiries concerning God's Diſpenſations, endeavour to prove thoſe ſuppoſed facts, which they have preconceived, from the *fitneſs* which they pretend to have diſcovered; that is, having determined of what is *fit* for God to do; they, on the credit of this, maintain that he hath done it. On the contrary, I deem it more rational, as well as modeſt, firſt to enquire of Scripture what God hath done: and, when that is known, it will be then time enough to explain the *fitneſs* of his doings.

Let us ſee now, what holy Scripture hath delivered concerning the DURATION of the extraordinary endowments of the Holy Spirit: Which, whether they reſted in the Recipient, and manifeſted themſelves in *Grace and Knowlege* tranſcending the powers of humanity; or whether they extended outwards, in the *gifts of healing*, to the relief of others' infirmities, may, with equal propriety, be called and be accounted MIRACULOUS. In the one caſe, the *gifted* perſon was paſſive; in the other, active.

Now the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of Paul, has, I preſume, determined this queſtion for us, where, in the paſſage quoted before, on another occaſion, he recapitulates the various prerogatives of the Apoſtolic age. This deciſive

paſſage

paſſage is in theſe words,—*Charity never faileth: but whether there be* PROPHECIES, *they ſhall fail; whether there be* TONGUES, *they ſhall ceaſe; whether there be* KNOWLEGE, *it ſhall vaniſh away* (3).

It was the Apoſtle's purpoſe, in this place, to exalt CHARITY above all other Chriſtian Graces; and therefore, having, in the preceding words, ſhewn its ſuperiority to the reſt, from its QUALITIES and attributes; he proceeds to urge the advantage ſtill further, from the conſideration of its DURABILITY —— *Charity never faileth, &c.*

The queſtion is, Whether the ſuperior *duration*, here aſcribed to *Charity* over *Prophecies*, *Tongues*, and *Knowlege*, reſpects only the progreſs of the Goſpel HERE; or whether it extends to the completion of it in it's triumphant ſtate, HEREAFTER? The common opinion is, that it reſpects another life; ſupported, as ſhould ſeem, by the Apoſtle's inforcing his argument on this obſervation, that *now we ſee thro' a glaſs darkly; but then face to face: now we know in part; but then ſhall we know even as we are known* (4); where the different condition of the *two ſtates* are plainly ſet in oppoſition to one another.

But the other ſenſe appears to me to be the true; and gives us the Apoſtle's meaning to this effect: "The virtue of *Charity* is to accompany the Chriſtian Church throughout all

(3) 1 Cor. xiii. 8. (4) 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

it's

it's ſtages here on earth; whereas the gifts of *prophecy*, of ſtrange *tongues*, of ſupernatural *knowlege*, are only tranſitory graces, beſtowed upon the Church during it's infirm and infant ſtate, to manifeſt it's divine birth, and to ſupport it againſt the deluſions and the Powers of darkneſs."

As the words, conſidered in this ſenſe, convey a moſt important Doctrine, viz. *the ceſſation of the miraculous operations of the Holy Spirit after the eſtabliſhment of the Chriſtian faith*, and as this perhaps is the only expreſs declaration of it, recorded in ſacred Scripture, I ſhall endeavour to ſupport my interpretation by conſiderations drawn from it's coherence, in this ſenſe, and in this ſenſe only, with what precedes and follows in the courſe of the Apoſtle's argument.

The Church of Corinth, tho' abundantly enriched with all divine Graces, would not yet ſuffer the Holy Ghoſt to do his *perfect work*, in the enlargement of the heart by univerſal benevolence; but, elated with SPIRITUAL PRIDE, (whoſe property is not to bear with thoſe who differ from us, and to deſpiſe thoſe who are beneath us in ſublime attainments) ſplit and divided themſelves into oppoſite Sects and Factions: And this unhappy ſituation not only rendering all their endowments vain and fruitleſs, but reflecting diſhonour on the *Giver of all good things*, the Apoſtle addreſſes himſelf to expoſe their folly with the utmoſt of his force and vigour of reaſoning.

He proves the superior excellence of *Charity* above all other spiritual graces whatsoever, both in it's QUALITIES and it's DURATION. The *first three verses* (5) of his argument declare that the other graces without Charity, are neither of use nor ornament in the Christian life: The *next four* (6) specify the superior qualities of Charity: and the *remaining six* (7) (of which, the words in question make the *first*) (8) consider Charity under the single advantage of it's continuance, when all those other graces, with which they were so foolishly elated, should be withdrawn. *Charity never faileth: but whether there be Prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be Tongues, they shall cease; whether there be Knowlege, it shall vanish away.* In the next two verses (9) he gives the reason, *For we know in part, and we prophecy in part; but when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.* As much as to say: When that CHRISTIAN LIFE, the lines of which are marked out by the Gospel, shall, by the vital powers of CHARITY on which it is erected, arrive to it's full vigour and maturity, then those temporary aids of the Holy Spirit (such as *Tongues*, *Prophecy*, and *Knowlege*, bestowed with a purpose to subdue the prejudices and scepticism of those without, and to support the weakness and infirmities of those within; and given too, but imperfectly, in proportion to the defects of the human Recipients) shall, like the scaffolding of a Palace now compleated, be

(5) Ver. 1, 2, 3. (6) Ver. 4, 5, 6, 7.
(7) Ver. 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. (8) Ver. 8.
(9) Ver. 9, 10.

taken down and removed. And to ſhew, that the loſs of theſe things will be no longer regretted, when the Church hath advanced from a ſtate of Infancy to Manhood, in the ſteady exerciſe of the CHRISTIAN LIFE OF CHARITY, he illuſtrates this truth by an elegant ſimilitude. —*When I was a Child, I ſpake as a Child, I underſtood as a Child: but when I became a man, I put away Childiſh things* (1). Yet no one will be ſo abſurd to ſuppoſe that it was the Apoſtle's intention to diſgrace theſe ſpiritual Gifts by ſo low a compariſon? It was the ABUSE of them only, (to which theſe Corinthians were ſo prone) that was deſigned to be corrected by it.

But the Apoſtle, having repreſented theſe extraordinary gifts to be as defective in themſelves as they are contemptible in their abuſe, thought fit to add, that this defect did not proceed from any penurious influx of the Holy Spirit, but from the narrowneſs of the human recipient; the paſſages to the Soul being ſo clogged up with corporeal obſtructions, as to be unable to convey to the Senſory any more than an oblique glimpſe of the SOVEREIGN GOOD: But that, when we have ſhaken off this mortal incumbrance, and regained the regions of light and liberty, we ſhall then intuitively comprehend the whole Œconomy both of NATURE and of GRACE. *For now* (ſays he) *we ſee thro' a glaſs darkly* (2), *but then face to face: Now I*

(1) Ver. 11.

(2) Βλέπομεν γαρ ἄρτι δι' ἐσόπτρου ἐν αἰνίγματι — the *ſeeing thro'*, or *in a glaſs, by an Enigma*, ſeems, at firſt view,

know in part, even as also I am known. And this observation, which evidently respects a *future state*, led men to understand the Apostle as taking in another life, on which to found that superior *duration* which he gives to *Charity*, the subject of his general argument. But they seem to have mistaken the drift of his remark concerning the defects in human knowlege, which was not made (as they suppose) for a *direct* inforcement of the argument in the eighth verse, *Charity never faileth, &c.* but was an *occasional* answer to an objection, which naturally arose from his management of one of the topics in the eleventh, *when I was a Child, &c.* For

view, an odd and incongruous expression, since information by a speculum, of what kind soever, conveys the natural or real image of the reflected object, tho' that image be seen only faintly and obscurely. But an *Enigma* is not the natural image of the object conveyed, but an arbitrary mark which, under very foreign ideas, is mysteriously made to stand for the natural image. Yet, if we attend carefully to the subject, we shall find the expression to be very elegant. The Apostle is comparing the knowlege of spiritual things, gained *here*, with that knowlege which we shall gain *hereafter*. Now all our present knowlege being conveyed thro' the Organs of Sense, the Apostle, by his ἐν αἰνίγματι, would insinuate, that our most correct and sublime ideas of spiritual things are no more the real images of spiritual things, than Enigmas, or mysteriously contrived marks, are the natural or real images of those things to which they are put as Signs. A *glass*, or *speculum*, is therefore used by the Apostle, in this place, to signify the *corporeal organs*; and an *Enigma* to signify the *representative knowlege*, which the corporeal organs are only capable of producing, when employed about spiritual things.

it

it might have been objected to the Apoſtle, "By this ſimilitude, you ſeem to repreſent the Goſpel as firſt ſpringing up in an infant-ſtate, and needing time and culture to bring it to perfection." "No, (replies the Apoſtle;) this laſt Law of God, like the firſt created Man, came perfect from the hands of its almighty framer. But man, to whom it was given, by reaſon of the imperfections of his preſent ſtate, arrived only by degrees to the more perfect knowlege and practice of it: and to this gradual advance, from obſcure to intuitive ſcience, does the ſimilitude refer." This, I ſay, ſeems to have been the ſource of the error: And yet the Apoſtle's concluding obſervation, was ſufficient to have ſet theſe critics right, and to have ſhewn them, that the ſuperior duration of Charity referred to the preſent life only.—*And* NOW *abideth* FAITH, HOPE, and CHARITY, *theſe three*; *but the greateſt of theſe is Charity.* Which is in effect to ſay, "You may now perhaps object, that this quality of *ſuperior duration* is not peculiar or confined to *Charity*, but belongs equally to thoſe two other Chriſtian graces, *Faith* and *Hope*, which travel thro' with the Church of God, and continue to ſupport and adorn it, in all its revolutions here on earth, when *Prophecy*, *Tongues*, and *Knowlege* ſhall long have *failed* and *ceaſed*, and *vaniſhed away*: So that, with regard to DURATION, *Faith* and *Hope* ſhare with *Charity*, in this advantage over the other tranſient endowments of the Spirit." "I agree, replies the Apoſtle, thus far to the Objection, that they are all three joint ſharers in this prerogative; but ſtill, I ſay, THE GREATEST OF THESE IS CHARITY: And in

the beginning of my argument (says he) I have given the reason, in the observation, that *Tho' I have all* FAITH *so that I could remove mountains, and tho' I give my body to be burned* [in sure and certain HOPE of a resurrection] *and have no Charity, it profiteth me nothing.* The reason is on account of the superior qualities of *Charity:* it hath those which *Faith* and *Hope* have not, *she seeketh not her own, &c.* as well as those which *Faith* and *Hope* have, and are most essential to them, for *she* BELIEVETH *all things, she* HOPETH *all things.*" It is thus the Apostle answers concealed objections; and at the same time instructs the unwary reader with what caution and application he should come to the study of that profound reasoning with which all his Epistles abound.

But now, suppose the *superior duration* of Charity to take in the consideration of another life, and the Apostle never could have said, that *Faith* and *Hope* had the prerogative of *remaining*, or of having an equal *abiding* with *Charity*, when both *faith* and *hope* will be swallowed up in fruition †.

From

† The late Bishop of London, Dr. Sherlock, in his first volume of Sermons, contends for the common interpretation of this passage; and to remove the difficulty of *faith* and *hope*'s being said to *abide* with *Charity* in a future state, argues thus,—" *Charity* and " universal benevolence is the very grace and orna- " ment of Heaven. Nor can *faith* and *hope* ever be " parted from TRUE RELIGION; for there is no " Being so great as not to depend on *faith in God*, " in his power and wisdom, or to be above *hoping any*

" *thing*

From the whole, then, of this account of *Charity*, it evidently appears, that THE MIRACULOUS POWERS OF THE CHURCH WERE TO CEASE ON ITS PERFECT ESTABLISHMENT; as well thoſe which relieved corporeal, as thoſe which adminiſtered aid to ſpiritual, diſtreſſes: and conſequently, that SUPERSTITION and FANATICISM equally laboured under the wound inflicted on them by the hand of the Apoſtle, when he made this virtual Declaration of the total withdrawing of thoſe *Powers*.

Here eſpecially, all the *ſuperſtitious* and *fanatical* pretences of the Church of Rome, to ſupernatural powers, are detected and expoſed; not only the gift of INFALLIBILITY, which comprehends *all Myſteries and all Knowlege*; and the work of TRANSUBSTANTIATION, which comprehends *all Faith*, not *to remove*, but to *make*, *mountains*; but likewiſe all the LEGENDARY MIRACLES of their Hierarchy in general, and of their canonized Saints in particular. In which

" *thing* from his goodneſs and benevolence." p. 377. Here St. Paul is ſpeaking of one thing, and the Biſhop, as uſual, of another. The Apoſtle's *faith* and *hope* are CHRISTIAN GRACES; that is, Faith in the *Meſſiah the Redeemer*, and Hope in the *Reſurrection of the dead*, both of which, hereafter will be, as is ſaid above, ſwallowed up in fruition. The Preacher, in order to ſupport a point, puts the change upon us, and, for the Apoſtle's *faith and hope*, gives us his own; a *faith and hope* at large, and in the air: ſuch as will *abide* indeed, while we have any being, but ſuch as, on the ſame principles of interpretation, will give abidance to *Knowlege* likewiſe, altho' the ſacred Writer expreſly tells us, *it is to vaniſh away*.

pretences, to obſerve it by the way, the blunder ſeems to be as glaring as the impoſture: St. Paul reckons the STATE OF CHRISTIAN PERFECTION not to be the STATE OF MIRACLES, but that of CHARITY. *For we know in part* (ſays he) *and we prophecy in part: but when* THAT WHICH IS PERFECT *is come, then that which is in part ſhall be done away* (3). What is *that perfect* thing *which was to come*; and which the Corinthians of this time ſo much wanted? What but that which he had ſo highly extolled, the State of CHARITY? So that as this advanced, the imperfect ſtate of MIRACLES was to recede, and *be done away*. Yet in the Church of Rome, the ſtate of SAINTSHIP, which is *their ſtate of perfection*, is ſupported by MIRACLES; while *St. Paul's ſtate of perfection*, that of CHARITY, was ſo little acknowleged or underſtood, that one of their greateſt Saints, and moſt abounding in *miraculous* endowments, was St. Dominic, the founder of the INQUISITION. Indeed if the Apoſtle's reaſoning would bear this inference, that *Miracles* were not only to remain till *Charity* had done *its perfect work*, but till it had perfectly done its work, I know of no Church that has a better claim to the continued exerciſe of thoſe Powers than the CHURCH OF ROME. But whatſoever need ſhe may have, ſhe fails ſo wretchedly in her moſt pompous exhibitions of them, that we may well regard ROMISH MIRACLES in the loweſt rank of thoſe *childiſh things*, which, the Apoſtle ſays, men and churches ſhould be aſhamed of, and *put away*, when they come to years of diſcretion.

(3) Ver. 9, 10.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

HAVING now eſtabliſhed the FACT, that *miraculous gifts* were to paſs away with the firſt ages of the Church, we may ſafely and reaſonably inquire into the FITNESS OF THE THING.

There appears to have been two cauſes of the *extraordinary* operations of the Holy Spirit: The manifeſtation of his Miſſion as it was predicted, and the comfort and inſtruction of a ſuffering Church, as it was promiſed.

To the firſt, we have obſerved, that in the early propagation of our holy Faith, it was fit the SANCTIFIER, as well as the REDEEMER, ſhould ſupport his preſence by Miracles. But the ſame conſiderations which ſhew this *fitneſs* to be no more, in the one caſe, ſhew it likewiſe in the other. For the DIVINE ORIGINAL of our *Faith* being once eſtabliſhed, it ſupports itſelf ever after on the ſame credibility of human teſtimony, which all other truths do, that are founded on facts.

1. As to his extraordinary operations for the comfort and inſtruction of the Church, we may obſerve that, on his firſt deſcent upon the Apoſtles, he found their minds rude and uninformed; ſtrangers to all celeſtial knowlege; prejudiced in favour of a *carnal Law*, and utterly averſe to the genius of the *everlaſting Goſpel*. The minds of theſe he illuminated; and, by degrees, led

into all the truths neceſſary for the Profeſſors of the Faith to know, or for the Propagators of it to teach. For *a rule of Faith* not being yet compoſed, ſome extraordinary infuſion of his Virtue was ſtill neceſſary, both to regulate the Faith of him who received it, and to conſtitute the Authority of him who was to communicate, of what he had received, to others. But when now the *Rule of faith* was perfected in an authentic collection of the Apoſtolic Writings, part of this office was transferred upon the Sacred Canon (4); and his enlightening grace was not to be expected in ſo abundant an effuſion as would make the Recipients *infallible Guides* to others, but only in a meaſure adequate to the direction of themſelves.

Theſe reaſons for the change of Œconomy, in the diſpenſations of the Holy Spirit, are ſufficient to diſcredit the falſe confidence of modern FANATICS, who pretend to as high a degree of divine communications as if no ſuch *Rule of Faith* was in being; or at leaſt, as if that Rule was ſo obſcure as to need the further aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit to explain his own meaning; or ſo imperfect as to need a new inſpiration to ſupply its wants.—But theſe men read the Hiſtory of the diſpenſations to the firſt Propagators of our holy Faith: They look with admiration on the privileges and powers conferred on thoſe choſen Inſtruments: their imagination grows heated: they forget the difference between the *preſent* and the *paſt* Œconomy of things: they ſeem to feel the impreſſions they hear of;

(4) See p. 28.

and

and they assume the airs, and mimic the Authority of Prophets and Apostles.

2. Again, the nature and genius of the Gospel were so averse to all the religious Institutions of the World, that the whole strength of human prejudices was set in opposition to it. To overcome the obstinacy and violence of these prejudices, nothing less than the power of the *Holy One* was sufficient. HE did the work of Man's Conversion; and reconciled an unbelieving world to God. At present, whatever there may be remaining of the bias of prejudice, (as such will mix itself even with our best conclusions) it draws the other way. So much then of his task was finished; and the Faith, from thenceforth, had a favourable hearing. Indeed, were we to make our estimate of the present State of the religious World from the Journals of modern Fanatics, we should be tempted still to think ourselves in a land of Pagans, with all their prejudices full blown upon them. For the account they give us of their provincial Missions always runs on in such strains as these—The *name of Jesus* is preached up in this City; the *glad tidings of the Gospel* conveyed to that Hamlet; a *new light springs up* in a land of darkness; and *life and immortality* is now first offered to those who *sit in the shadow of death.*

3. A further reason for the abatement of the influences of the supporting spirit of Grace is the peace and security of the CHURCH. There was a time when the Powers of this world were combined together for its destruction. At such a period, nothing but superior aid from Above

could support humanity in sustaining so great a conflict as that which the holy Martyrs encountered with joy and rapture; the horrors of death in torment. But now the profession of the Christian Faith is attended with ease and honour; and the conviction, which the weight of human testimony, and the conclusions of human reason afford us, of its truth, is abundantly sufficient to support us in our religious perseverance.

But the obstinate and continued claims of FANATICS in all Ages, to this primitive abundance of the Spirit, may make it expedient to examine their pretensions yet more minutely and exactly. And to this inquiry, Scripture itself, which foresaw and foretold the evil, directs us to the remedy, where it exhorts us to TRY THE SPIRITS. *Beloved, believe not every spirit*, (says St. John) *but try the Spirits whether they be of God; because many false Prophets are gone out into the World* (5). At the time this precept was given there was a more than ordinary attention requisite to guard against the delusions of false Prophets: For, the abundant effusion of the Holy Spirit on the rising Religion gave encouragement to Impostors to counterfeit, and a handle to Enthusiasts to mimic, all that was equivocal in its operations.

Hence we find that, amongst the various endowments of the primitive Church, some of which were to correct Gainsayers, and others to edify Believers, there was one of the mixed

(5) 1 John iv. 6.

kind,

kind, of ſpecial uſe to ſupport the dignity, and to vindicate the divine original of all the reſt; by detecting Impoſtors, who crept in amongſt the truly inſpired: and this, we have ſeen, the Apoſtle called, the DISCERNING OF SPIRITS. With this Gift, Peter detected Simon the Magician; and with this, Paul confounded Elymas the Sorcerer.

But when *extraordinary inſpiration* itſelf had ceaſed, the falſe pretence to it, for ſome wiſe ends of Providence, to us unknown, ſtill continued to infect the Church with its impious Mummeries; and while that Virtue, *(the diſcerning of Spirits)* whoſe office was to detect them, was withdrawn with the reſt of the inſpired graces, the Command *to try the Spirits whether they were of God* ſtill remained in force. But to *try* without a faculty of *diſcerning* would be a dangerous, or at beſt, an impertinent employment.

Now from this unreaſonable taſk we are delivered by the gracious providence of the Holy Spirit; who provided that thoſe whom he had endowed with the gift of *diſcerning of Spirits* ſhould leave behind them ſome Rules whereby the Faithful of all ages might be qualified to *try the Spirits*, and be thereby enabled to defend themſelves from the ſeduction of error and impoſture: becauſe, ſays the advice, *many falſe Prophets are gone out into the World.*

If the *falſe Prophet* pretend to a *character foretold*, then we are bid to *ſearch the Scriptures*,

tures (6), to see if they *testify* of such a Character. Thus the *Bereans* are esteemed of more *noble* and generous sentiments than their Neighbours, for this very point of wisdom, *the searching the Scriptures daily to find whether those things were so* (7).

But if the *false Prophet* pretend only to some extraordinary measure of the Spirit, then we are directed to *try* that *Spirit* by applying to it the following Characters of real inspiration.—THE WISDOM THAT IS FROM ABOVE IS FIRST PURE; THEN PEACEABLE, GENTLE AND EASY TO BE INTREATED, FULL OF MERCY AND GOOD FRUITS, WITHOUT PARTIALITY, AND WITHOUT HYPOCRISY (8).

It is worthy our notice, that, in this rule or direction for the *trial of Spirits*, the marks of real inspiration are to be applied only NEGATIVELY: That is, we may safely pronounce, that the man in whom they are not found, hath not the Spirit of God, or *the wisdom which is from above:* while on the other hand, we are not to conclude; that he in whom any or all of them are found, is, from this circumstance alone, endowed with any *extraordinary* measure of the Holy Spirit; since they may be no other than those ordinary graces which arise from the knowlege of, and obedience to, God's Will as contained in sacred Scripture. So that altho' such a one may be truly said to be possessed of *the wisdom which*

(6) John v. 39. *Search the Scriptures, for they testify of me.* (7) Acts xvii. 11.
(8) James iii. 17.

is from above, it is not that which comes to him by way of inſpiration, the thing here in queſtion.

Thus we ſee, the Apoſtle's Rule carries, in its very nature, the evidence of its divine original: for the aſſiſtance wanted in the *trial of Spirits*, ſince theſe extraordinary powers were withdrawn, was only ſuch a ſet of Marks as was rather fitted to detect Impoſtors, than to aſſure the truth of a Character not now to be expected.

This the Reader ſhould have in mind, when we bring him to apply theſe marks to the features of modern Fanaticiſm; eſpecially as they are ſeen in the famed Leader of the METHODISTS, Mr. JOHN WESLEY; and not *ſeen* neither, as Sancho Pancho *ſaw* his miſtreſs, *by hearſay*, (which indeed has been too much the cuſtom, in the repreſentations of this tranſcendant man) but as he appears in perſon in his own JOURNALS: For by thoſe indelible marks alone, there traced out, and by his own pen, I purpoſe to TRY, in him, chiefly, THE SPIRITS of all modern Pretenders to ſupernatural Powers.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

AND that I may not be ſuſpected of combating a Fantom, it will be proper firſt of all to ſhew that this extraordinary man hath, in fact, laid claim to almoſt every Apoſtolic gift and grace; and in as full and ample a meaſure as they were poſſeſſed of old.

But as a good Actor will firſt prepare his Scene, he hath carried us back, by the magic of his dramatic powers, into all the wonders of the primitive Times; where we meet the Devil unchained and let looſe, to exert his laſt efforts againſt the *new* Religion: As, on the other hand, to oppoſe to his infernal rage, we ſee, with the ſame evidence, an abundant effuſion of the Holy Spirit poured out upon this *riſing* Church. And now, every thing being well prepared, Both theſe Powers ſtand ready to act their parts, by the time our Apoſtle thinks fit to appear upon the Stage.

His JOURNALS are full of the Alarms which he gave the Devil, and of the mortifications which the Devil gave him.—"The Devil (ſays "he) knew his kingdom ſhook, and therefore "ſtirred up his ſervants to ring bells, and make "all the noiſe they could (1)."—"The *Devil's* "*Children* fought valiantly for their Maſter, "that his kingdom ſhould not be deſtroyed:

(1) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 37.

"And

" And many ſtones fell on my right hand and " on my left (2)." " Some or other of the " *Children of Belial* had laboured to diſturb us " ſeveral nights before (3)." Nay, ſo accuſtomed was he to theſe conflicts with the *Evil One*, that it was even matter of ſurpriſe to him, to find the Enemy, once upon a time, reſerved and *ſtill*; till he reflected, that it was becauſe *his Goods were in peace*. " I preached—as yet I " have found only one perſon amongſt them, " who knew the love of God, before my Bro- " ther came. No wonder the Devil was ſo " ſtill: for *his Goods were in peace* (4)." Another inſtance which he gives us, of this peaceable convention between his Congregation and the Devil, is in one of his northern excurſions. " Wed. 29, I preached at Durham to a QUIET, " STUPID Congregation (5)." But this never laſted long wherever he came; for he had always the ſkill of curing this ſpiritual lethargy by a frenzy.

When the Devil had ſet the mob on work, he then, like other Politicians, retired to better company; ſuch as the two Mr. Weſleys and the Saints. But, as this ſad and ſolemn meeting was not to his taſte, he tried to *buffet* them into a better humour. " I was a little " ſurpriſed at ſome who were *buffeted* of Satan " in an unuſual manner by ſuch a *ſpirit of*

(2) D°. p. 82. (3) D°. 31.
(4) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746, to July 20, 1750. p. 29.
(5) Journ. from July 20, 1750, to Oct. 28, 1754. p. 16.

" *laughter*

" *laughter*—I knew the ſame thing ten or eleven " years ago. Part of Sunday my Brother and " I then uſed to ſpend in walking in the mea- " dows and ſinging Pſalms. But one day, juſt " as we were beginning to ſing, he burſt out " into a *loud laughter*. I began to be very " angry, and preſently after to laugh as loud as " he.—We were ready to tear ourſelves in " pieces, but were forced to go home without " ſinging another line (6)." From the Head, theſe *buffetings* (which, not to overload the Devil, I will, for once, venture to call *hyſterical)* deſcended, and were plentifully beſtowed, upon the Members. And, " one evening (ſays he) " ſuch a *Spirit of laughter* was amongſt us, " that many were much offended. But the atten- " tion of all was ſoon fixed upon poor L——a " S——; one ſo violently and variouſly torn " of the EVIL ONE did I never ſee before. " Sometimes ſhe *laughed*, then broke out into " curſing and blaſpheming, &c. (7)" On this occaſion, he relates a fact, which, tho' He ſeems not to have turned to a proper uſe, the ſober and attentive Reader may.—" Our out- " ward trials indeed were now removed, and " peace was in all our borders. But ſo much " the more did inward trials abound, *and if one* " *member ſuffered, all the members ſuffered with* " *it*. So ſtrange a SYMPATHY did I never " obſerve before: Whatever conſiderable temp- " tation fell on any one, unaccountably ſpread- " ing itſelf to the reſt. So that exceeding few

(6) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 37. (7) Ibid. p. 38.

" were

" were able to escape it (8)." In these various struggles, the Devil was at length tired out; and Mr. Wesley forces him into close quarters; to betake himself to the bodies of friend or foe indifferently, just as he could find opportunity or entertainment. And now comes on the shining part of our Apostle's exploits, the driving him out, in the face of the whole Congregation, by EXORCISMS and spiritual Ejectments.

But if Evil thus abounded, Grace did much more abound in this memorable Æra, when Mr. John Wesley first went out upon his Mission. The Spirit overcame all resistance, broke down all the strong-holds of *Sin*, and, what Mr. Wesley was much more set against, of INSENSIBILITY.—" So many living Witnesses (says " he) hath God given, that *his hand is* STILL " *stretched out to heal*, and that *signs and* " *wonders are even* NOW *wrought by his holy* " *Child, Jesus* (9)." For, *out of the mouths of babes and sucklings*, it once again, as of old, *perfected praise*; the *young men saw visions, and the old men dreamed dreams.*

" Amongst the poor Colliers at Placey, John " Lane, then *nine or ten years old*, was one of " the first who found peace with God. From " that hour he continued to walk day and " night in the light of his countenance. I

(8) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 37.

(9) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739.

" saw

" saw him last year longing to be with Christ, " &c. (1)"—" I enquired more particularly of " Mrs. N. concerning her little Son. She said, " He appeared to have a continual fear of God, " and an awful sense of his presence; that he " frequently went to prayers by himself: that " he had an exceeding great tenderness of " Conscience, being sensible of the least sin. " —A few days since he broke out into prayers " aloud, and then said, Mamma, I shall go to " Heaven soon—and you will go there too, " and my Pappa; but you will not go so soon." On which Mr. Wesley very judiciously observes, " When the Holy Ghost teaches, is there any " delay in learning? This Child was then just " *three years old.* A year or two after he died " in peace (2)."

——" I heard (says he) a surprising account " of a young woman of Manchester, which I " received from her own mouth. She said, I " was sitting in the house while one read the " passion hymn. I had always gone to Church, " and had never heard any of the methodist " preachers. On a sudden I saw our Saviour " on the Cross, as plain as if it had been with " my bodily eyes.—Then I saw as it were " Heaven open, and God sitting upon his " Throne. And I saw a large book, in which " all my sins were written, &c. (3)" But

(1) Journ. from July 20, 1750, to Oct. 28, 1754. p. 18.

(2) Journ. from Oct. 27, 1734, to Nov. 17, 1746. p. 133.

(3) Journ. from Novemb. 25, 1746, to July 20, 1750. p. 94.

this

this was nothing to the vision of S—— T——, (a girl of *ten years and three quarters old)* which takes up between three and four pages in the telling; so that partly for the length, but principally because I suspect Mr. J. Wesley intended it only for the solace of his *babes and sucklings*, for whose use this discourse is not intended, I shall only point to the Journal where the wonderful adventure is related (4). For the same reason I shall pass over many of the *Dreams* and *Visions*.

All these wonders were not worked for nothing. The Spirit of the Lord was gone out, and it did not stop till it had manifested itself, in the last efforts of its power, THE NEW BIRTH: But it went not out, as of old, in the *still, small voice*, but in storms and tempests, in cries and extacies, in tumults and confusion; and when Nature was exhausted, then Grace had done its work. But he tells us, his correspondents hearing of *this strange* affair, enquired of him *how can these things be?* They cautioned him *not to regard visions or dreams, or to fancy people had remission of sins because of their cries or tears*, &c. To this, he tells us, he answered, "You deny that God does now work these "effects: at least that he works them in this "manner. I affirm both. I have seen very "many persons changed in a moment from "the spirit of fear, horror, despair, to the "spirit of love, joy and peace.—What I have "to say touching *visions* or *dreams* is this: I

(4) Journ. from Oct. 27, 1743, to Nov. 17, 1746. p. 141. *& seq.*

"know

" know several persons in whom this great " change was wrought in a dream, or during " a strong representation to the eye of their " mind, of Christ either on the Cross or in " glory (5)."

But here unhappily, as is usual in these matters, the symptoms of *Grace* and of *Perdition* were so interwoven and confounded with one another, that our Apostle himself is sometimes at a loss to distinguish the hand; and to determine, with certainty, who had the largest share in the WORK, GOD or the DEVIL; insomuch that a Manichean might have greatly availed himself of this untoward circumstance. Mr. J. Wesley had been grieved, and the Spirit of God had been grieved likewise, at the scandal given by some of his own flock who " blasphemed the work, and imputed it " either to Nature or the force of Imagination " and Animal-spirits, or even to the delusion " of the Devil (6)."—" Many (says he) were " deeply convinced; but none were delivered " from that painful conviction. *The Children* " *came to the* BIRTH, *but there was not strength* " *to* BRING FORTH. I fear we have grieved " the Spirit of the jealous God by questioning " his work (7)." Yet these pangs of the NEW BIRTH becoming, on certain occasions, more violent, and more general than ordinary, and even found to be taking and infectious,—the Apostle himself was staggered and seemed

(5) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 48, 49. (6) Ibid. p. 59.
(7) Ibid. p. 68.

ready

ready to recant. "These symptoms I can no "more impute to any natural cause than to "the Spirit of God. I make no doubt it was "SATAN tearing them as they were coming to "Christ. And hence proceeded those grievous "cries, whereby he might design both to dis-"credit the work of God, and to affright fear-"ful people from hearing that word whereby "their Souls might be saved (8)." But since these Symptoms were universal and inseparable from the *new birth*, I rather think, and I will venture to say, as it is only raising the Catachresis one step higher, that the Devil was here only in the office of *Man-Midwife* to the *new birth*. And Mr. Wesley himself, on second thoughts, seems not much averse to this conceit, as appears from the following relation.— "I visited (says he) a poor old woman a mile "or two from the Town. Her trials had been "uncommon; inexpressible agonies of mind "joined with all sorts of bodily pain, not (it "seemed) from any natural cause, but the "*direct operation of Satan:* Her joys were now "as uncommon; she had little time to sleep, "having for several months last past seen, as "it were, the *unclouded face of God*, and praised "him day and night (9)."

(8) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743.
(9) Journ. from July 20, 1749, to Oct. 30, 1751. p. 60.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

SUCH was the EVANGELIC STATE of things when Mr. J. Wesley first entered on this Ministry: who, seeing himself surrounded with subjects so harmoniously disposed to obey the touch of a master, thus triumphantly exults:—"Full as I was, I knew not where "to begin, till my Testament opened on these "words, *I came not to call the Righteous, but "Sinners, to repentance:* In applying which, "my soul was so enlarged, that methought I "could have cried out (in another sense than "poor, vain Archimedes) *Give me where to "stand, and I will* SHAKE THE EARTH (1)." A bravado that would have suited Ignatius Loiola in his first slippery extacies in the mire, as the World has sufficiently experienced. How it became our adventurer, on his first setting out, the World may be brought to know in good time.

Here then was a Scene well prepared for a good Actor, and excellently fitted up for the part he was disposed to play, which, as we have said, was that of an APOSTLE. And, to do him justice, he hath exhibited it with such splendor, that, of all the Apostolic gifts and graces, there is but one with which we find him not adorned, viz. the *gift of tongues*; and as to this, the learned Mr. J. Wesley may reply with the learned Paul, *he already spoke*

(1) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739.

 with

with tongues more than they all. For the reſt, whether they were *propheſy*,—*ſupernatural aids in his miniſtry*,—*healing the ſick*,—*caſting out Devils*,—or *inflicting divine vengeance on his oppoſers*, he had them all, as we underſtand by his *journals*, in abundant meaſure.

We will begin (as is fitting) where he himſelf began, with declaring his MISSION. "A "multitude of people got together in the houſe, "yard, and ſtreet, far more than my voice "could reach. I cryed aloud to as many of "them as could hear, *All things are ready: "come ye to the marriage.* I then DELIVERED "MY MESSAGE. So before ten we took "boat, &c. (2)" Yet, like Moſes, he was at firſt a little mutinous.—"From the directions "I received from God this day, touching an "affair of the greateſt importance, I could "not but obſerve the miſtake of thoſe who "aſſert, "God will not anſwer your prayer "unleſs your heart be wholly reſigned to his "will." *My heart was not entirely reſigned "to his will.* Yet I know and am aſſured, he "heard my voice, and ſent forth his light and "his truth (3)."

PROPHESY or *Speaking by the Spirit*, the firſt and moſt eſſential quality of a divine Meſſenger, he had at will. "We had (ſays he) a watch "night at the Chapel: being weak in body,

(2) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746, to July 20, 1750. p. 29.

(3) Journ. from his embarking for Georgia, to his return to London, p. 37.

" I was afraid I could not go through it. But " the longer I ſpoke, the more ſtrength I had. " Inſomuch that at twelve a clock all my " wearineſs and weakneſs was gone; and I " was as one refreſhed with wine (4)."—" Se- " veral of the Gentry deſired to ſtay at the " meeting of the Society, to whom I explained " the nature of inward Religion, *words flowing* " *upon me faſter than I could ſpeak* (5)."—" I " intended to have given an exhortation to the " Society. But as ſoon as we met, the *Spirit* " *of Supplication fell upon us*, ſo that I could hard- " ly do any thing but pray and give thanks, till it " was time for us to part (6)." But the Spirit ſoon came down in a torrent that took away all utterance.—" In the evening the word of God " was indeed quick and powerful. Afterwards, " I deſired the men as well as women to meet. " But I could not ſpeak to them. *The Spirit of* " *prayer was ſo poured upon us all*, that we could " only ſpeak to God (7)."

The *exterior* aſſiſtances in his Miniſtry were no leſs ſignal than the *interior*.——Many were " ſeated on a large Wall adjoining, which be- " ing built of looſe ſtones, in the middle of " the Sermon all fell down at once. *I never* " *ſaw, heard, nor read of ſuch a thing before.*

(4) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746, to July 20, 1750. p. 32.

(5) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 87.

(6) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746, to July 20, 1750. p. 84-5.

(7) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 104.

" The

" The whole wall and the perſons ſitting upon " it ſunk down together, none of them ſcream- " ing out, and very few altering their poſture. " And not one was hurt at all; but they ap- " peared ſitting at the bottom, juſt as they ſat " at the top. Nor was there any interruption " either of my ſpeaking, or of the attention of " the hearers (8)." The next riſes in due gradation. An unruly *mob* became of a ſudden as harmleſs as the *ſtones*. Tho', had they met, and oppoſed the miniſtry, *together*, one does not know what might have happened.—— " The mob had juſt broke open the door, when " we came into the lower room; and exactly " while they burſt in at one door, we walked " out at the other. *Nor did one man take any* " *notice of us*, tho' we were within five yards " of each other (9)." Without doubt they were ſtruck *blind*; tho', in imitation of the mo- deſt ſilence of the Evangeliſt, who relates the like adventure of the bleſſed Jeſus, he forbears the expreſs mention of this ſtupendous miracle. ——The next and more powerful operation was on his female friends; and theſe, he as fairly ſtruck *dumb*.—— " The whole multitude " were ſilent, while I was ſpeaking. Not a " whiſper was heard. But the moment I had " done, the *Chain fell off their tongues*. I was " really ſurprized. Surely never was ſuch a " cackling made on the banks of Cayſter, or " the Common of Sedgmoor (1)." And *to*

(8) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746, to July 20, 1750. p. 23.
(9) Ibid. p. 57.
(1) Ibid. p. 96.

chain up the tongues of five hundred cackling goſſips, he held, and with great reaſon, an exploit worth recording. Indeed he appears to have taken the moſt effectual method with them, that is, to *out-clamour* them: For thus he meaſures out his own Stentoronic voice.—" Obſerving " that ſeveral ſat on the ſide of the oppoſite hill, " I afterwards deſired one to meaſure the " ground; and we found it was ſevenſcore " yards from the place where I had ſtood. " Yet the people there heard perfectly well. I " did not think any human voice could have " reached ſo far (2)." And as, on proper occaſions, every courteous Knight-Errant has condeſcended to let his *horſe* into a ſhare of the adventure, ſo our Spiritual Martialiſt, unwilling to break ſo good a cuſtom, has divided (as St. Martin did his cloak with the Beggar) the next exploit of price with his Beaſt. " My " horſe was exceeding lame—we could not " diſcern what it was that was amiſs, and yet " he could ſcarce ſet his foot on the ground.— " My head ached more than it had done for ſome " months (what I here aver is the naked fact; " let every man *account for it* as he ſees good). " I then thought, " Cannot God heal either " man or beaſt, by any means, or *without any!* " Immediately my wearineſs and head-ache " ceaſed, and my Horſe's lameneſs *in the ſame* " *inſtant*. Nor did he halt any more either that " day or the next. *A very odd accident this* " *alſo* (3)."

(2) Journ. from July 20, 1753, to Oct. 28, 1754. p. 10.

(3) Journ. from Oct. 27, 1743, to Nov. 17, 1746.

Come we next to his GIFT OF HEALING. One of his miracles of this kind, had, it seems, been brought in question; on which occasion, he thus explains himself—"Miracle or no Miracle, the fact is plain. W. Kirkman is, I apprehend, still alive and able to certify for himself, that he had that cough threescore years, and since that time [viz. the miraculous aid afforded him] it had not returned (4)." In the pamphlet where this extraordinary case was first recorded, Mr. Wesley asks, Whether any one could suppose, that if he had performed it by his skill in physic, he should not have been ready to do honour to himself rather than transfer that honour to another? If Mr. Wesley be serious in this question, he is the dupe of his spiritual ambition. The Character of a great Saint is infinitely more flattering to the Head of a Sect than that of a great Physician.—But to proceed.—"I administered the Sacrament to R. A. Some years ago he found peace with God, and was freed at once without any human means from a distemper *naturally incurable* (5)." But acute as well as chronical disorders fly his sacred presence.—"I found (says he) Mr. Lunell in so violent a fever that there was little hope of his life. *He revived the moment he saw me*, and fell into a breathing sweat. He began to recover from that time. *Perhaps for this also was I sent* (6)." "In the even-

(4) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746, to July 10, 1750. p. 123.

(5) Journ. from July 20, 1749, to Oct. 30, 1751. p. 34.

(6) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 34.

" ing I called upon Anne Calcut. She had " been ſpeechleſs for ſome time. But almoſt " as ſoon as we began to pray, God reſtored " her ſpeech. She then witneſſed a good con- " feſſion indeed. I expected to ſee her no " more. *But*, FROM THAT HOUR, THE " FEVER LEFT HER, and in a few days ſhe " aroſe and walked, glorifying God (7)."— " I viſited ſeveral of the Sick. Moſt of them " were ill of the ſpotted Fever; which, they " informed me, had been extremely mortal, " few perſons recovering from it. But God " had ſaid, HITHERTO SHALT THOU COME. " I believe there was NOT ONE *with whom we* " *were, but he recovered* (8)."—" They told " me the Phyſician ſaid, he did not expect Mr. " Meyrick would live till the morning. I went " to him, but his pulſe was gone. He had " been ſpeechleſs and ſenſeleſs for ſome time. " A few of us immediately joined in prayer (I " relate *the naked fact*.) Before we had done, " his ſenſe and his ſpeech returned. Now he " that will account for this by *natural cauſes*, " has my *free leave*. I chuſe to ſay, THIS IS " THE POWER OF GOD (9)." However, gracious as this *free leave* is, I would not, Reader! be the man to adviſe you to truſt to it. Saints are vindictive: He has fairly told you what he *chuſes* to call it. And after this, who can tell

(7) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 34.

(8) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 61.

(9) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 81.

how

how far he may think the honour of God concerned in making so free with his Messenger as to take him at his word, having before solemnly assured you, of "many living witnesses which "God hath given, that *His hand is* STILL "*stretched out to heal*; *and that signs and wonders* "*are* even NOW, wrought by his holy Child "JESUS (1)?"

From the cure of *natural* diseases, proceed we to the *supernatural*, or, saving your presence, to the CASTING OUT OF DEVILS. Having related, by way of prelude, the extravagances of a furious female Demoniac of nineteen or twenty years of age, whom he set to rights without much ceremony; he proceeds immediately to another of the same Sex; but her, he exorcises in form, and according to the true Roman fashion.—"I was sent for to one in Bristol— "She lay on the ground furiously gnashing her "teeth, and after a while roared aloud. It "was not easy for three or four persons to hold "her, *especially when the name of Jesus was* "*named.* We prayed; the violence of her "symptoms ceased, *tho'*, *without a compleat de-* "*liverance.* In the evening being sent for to "her again, I was unwilling, indeed afraid to "go; thinking it would not avail, unless some, "who were *strong in faith*, were to wrestle "with God for her. I opened my Testament "on these words—*I was afraid*, *and went and* "*hid my talent in the earth.* I stood reproved, "and went immediately. She began scream-

(1) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 40.

" ing before I came into the room, then broke " out into a horrid laughter mixt with blaſ- " phemy, grievous to hear. One who, from " many circumſtances, apprehended a preter- " natural Agent to be concerned in this, aſk- " ing, How didſt thou dare to enter into a " Chriſtian? was anſwered, *She is no Chriſtian.* " *She is mine.* Q. Doſt thou not tremble at the " name of Jeſus? No words followed, but *ſhe* " *ſhrunk back and trembled exceedingly.* Q. Art " thou not encreaſing thy own damnation? It " was faintly anſwered, *Ay, ay:* which was " followed by freſh curſing and blaſpheming. " My Brother coming in, ſhe cried out, " *Preacher! Field-Preacher. I do not love field-* " *preaching.* This was repeated two hours to- " gether, with ſpittings and all the expreſſions " of ſtrong averſion. And now it was that " God ſhewed he heareth the Prayer—She was " filled with peace, and knew that the *Son of* " *Wickedneſs was departed from her.*"—This is very well: The next is not inferior—" I was " ſent for to Kingſwood again" [namely to the young woman with whom he preludes theſe atchievements.] " A violent rain began juſt " as I ſet out, ſo that I was thoroughly wet in " a few minutes. Juſt at that time the wo- " man (then three miles off) cried out, *Yon-* " *der comes Weſley galloping as faſt as he can.* " When I was come, I was quite cold and " dead, and fitter for ſleep than prayer. She " burſt out into a horrid laughter, and ſaid, " *No power, no power; no faith, no faith: She* " *is mine. Her Soul is mine, I have her, and* " *will not let go.* We begged of God to in- " creaſe our faith—One, who was clearly con-

" vinced

" vinced this was no natural diſorder, ſaid, *I* " *think Satan is let looſe.* I FEAR HE WILL " NOT STOP HERE; and added, I command " thee in the name of the Lord Jeſus, to tell if " thou haſt commiſſion to torment any other " Soul. It was immediately anſwered, *I have;* " *L---y C---r and S---h J---s*, two who lived " at ſome diſtance, and were *then* in perfect " health (2)." In which, I dare ſay, they did not long continue, after the Exorciſt had thus conſigned them over to Satan, now *let looſe* to do Mr. Weſley honour. But what is moſt material (if we may believe Him or his ſpiritual Coadjutor) is, that Mr. Weſley's *new birth only* makes the *Chriſtian*; and that the Devil hates *field-preaching*. To evince theſe great Truths ſeems to have been the end both of the Poſſeſſions and of the Exorciſms. POPERY and PURITANISM, it is to be obſerved, have, at times, for the like righteous ends, received equal credit from the ſame reverend Teſtimonies, the Devil and the Prieſt: as the curious may read with pleaſure in the *Detection* of two famous impoſtures carried on in each of thoſe Quarters, and recorded by the elegant pen of Dr. Samuel HARSNET, (3) biſhop of Norwich, and afterwards Archbiſhop of York. By which we may gather, that the Inhabitants below are divided into Sects as well as thoſe above; and that there are *Popiſh*, *Puritan*, and

(2) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 92, 93, & ſeq.

(3) *A declaration of egregious Popiſh impoſtures, &c.* Lond. 1603. Q. *Declaration of Puritan impoſtures, in the caſe of Darrel*, &c. Lond. 1599. Q.

Methodiſt, DEVILS; who have all, in their turns, been forced to anſwer to Interrogatories; and to depoſe in honour of the Sect they perſecuted, at the expence of that to which they belonged.

Such were the bleſſings which Mr. Weſley beſtowed upon his Friends: for his Enemies he had other things in ſtore; and thoſe no ſmall ones, the exterminating JUDGMENTS OF HEAVEN. Yet ſtill the treatment was ſtrictly Apoſtolical. "I preached (ſays he) at Dar-"laſton, late a den of Lions: But moſt of the "fierceſt of them *God had called away by* A "TRAIN OF AMAZING STROKES; and thoſe "that remain are now as lambs (4)." The corrections, we ſee, as thoſe of Heaven ſhould, had their proper effect.—"I preached at R——, "once a place of furious riot and perſecution; "but quiet and calm, ſince the *bitter Rector is* "*gone to give* AN ACCOUNT OF HIMSELF TO "GOD (5)."—"Hence we rode to T——, "where the Miniſter was ſlowly recovering "from a violent fit of the Palſy, with which he "was ſtruck *immediately* after he had been "preaching a virulent Sermon againſt the *Me-*"*thodiſts* (6)."—"The Rev. Mr. —— preached "—and inveighed very much againſt the novel "ſect, the upſtart *Methodiſts*—Shortly after, he "was to preach [the ſame ſermon again].

(4) Journ. from July 20, 1749, to Oct. 30, 1751. p. 81.

(5) Journ. from July 20, 1750, to Oct. 28, 1754. p. 11.

(6) Journ. ibid. p. 23.

" He had named the text twice, when he was " ſuddenly ſeized with a rattling in his throat, " attended with a hideous groaning. He fell " backward againſt the door of the pulpit;— " was carried away, as it ſeemed, dead into the " veſtry. In two or three days he recovered " his ſenſes, and the Sunday following, " DIED (7)."

" One of the chief of thoſe who came to " make the diſturbance on the firſt inſtant, had " HANGED HIMSELF.—A ſecond of them had " been for ſome days in ſtrong pain, and had " many times ſent to deſire our prayers. A " third came to me himſelf and confeſſed, he " was hired that night and made drunk on " purpoſe: But when he came to the door, *he* " *knew not what was the matter*, he could not " *ſtir* nor *open his mouth* (8)." Here, by ill luck, the miracle ſuffers; for drunkenneſs alone is but too apt to deprive a man of his faculties of ſpeech and local motion. " I was quite ſur- " prized when I heard Mr. R— preach. That " ſoft, ſmooth, tuneful voice, which he ſo " often employed to *blaſpheme the Work of God*, " was loſt without hope of recovery. All " means had been tried, but none took place. " He now ſpoke in a manner SHOCKING TO " HEAR, &c. (9)"—" Mr. C. ſpoke ſo much " in favour of the Rioters, that they were all

(7) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 103-4.

(8) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741.

(9) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746, to July 20, 1750. p. 79.

" discharged—a few days after Mr. C. walk-
" ing over the same field *dropt down and spoke*
" *no more.* Surely the MERCY of God would
" not suffer a well-meaning man to be any
" longer a tool to *Persecutors* (1)."—" Calling
" at Newgate [in Bristol] I was informed that
" the poor wretches under sentence of death
" were earnestly desiring to speak with me;
" but that it could not be: Alderman Beecher
" having just then sent an express order, that
" they should not. I CITE *Alderman Beecher to*
" *answer for these Souls at the judgment seat of*
" *Christ* (2)."

In reviewing these JUDGMENTS (tho' fulminated with the air of one who had the divine Vengeance at his disposal) I find some difference between his and those inflicted by the Apostles.

1. Their terrors fall upon Cheats and Impostors, such as *Ananias* and *Sapphira*; *Elymas* the Sorcerer, and *Simon* the Magician: Whereas the judgments of this new Apostle strike only the members of his own Church, for opposing the tumults of *field-preaching*, and the freaks of, what he calls, THE NEW BIRTH. 2. The Enemies of the infant Church were the jewish Leaders; and they persecuted in good earnest; yet all these, the Apostles left untouched, and reserved them for a future reckoning. Mr. Wesley's Enemies are his own fellow-members; and they persecute in jest; that is, they beat drums, they ring bells, and roar with the

(1) Journ. ibid. p. 108. (2) Journ. ibid. p. 31.

Rabble;

Rabble; yet these, with unrelenting rage, he *cuts off for troubling him:* while the anger of the holy Apostle, on the like occasion, never rose higher than a passionate wish (3). These differences, I leave Mr. Wesley to reconcile. There is another, which, I think, I may be able to account for myself. 3. When the Apostles punished publicly, they as publicly pronounced sentence. Thus to Sapphira, *Behold the feet of them which buried thy husband are at the Door and shall carry thee out*; to Simon, *Thy money perish* WITH THEE; and to Elymas—*Now behold the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind*—But, in this very important affair, Mr. Wesley appears to have followed a better model, the practice of the INQUISITION; where, tho' the *Execution* be with all the open pomp of bitter and uncharitable piety, the *Sentence*, it is well known, is ever pronounced *in secret*. In one instance indeed, he varies from his model; and, at Bristol, commences, as we have seen, a regular process against Mr. *Alderman Beecher*; whom he summoneth, to give an account for *lost Souls, at the judgment seat of Christ:* But whether the Alderman demurred; or whether he excepted to the jurisdiction; or indeed what became of him, after he had been so fairly *cited*, we no where learn.

These are some of the extraordinary Graces of which Mr. J. Wesley assumes the Privileges. But let not this faithful view of them, delivered in his own words, be mistaken for a confuta-

(3) *I would they were even cut off which trouble you.* Gal. v. 12.

tion.

tion. My purpose, here, is only to shew that he lays claim to them, and so becomes a proper Subject of the APOSTOLIC TEST, by which we are enabled to discriminate all sublunary *Wisdom* from that which is *from above*. And if, on the application now to be made, he cannot bear the *touch*, it will be our fault not to see him for the future, in his genuine FORM of Deluder and Fanatic; which he has been long suspected to have covered with another, namely, the FORM OF GODLYNESS.

CHAP. VI.

WE come now to the application of this Sovereign Test, the Scourge and Confusion of Imposture.

This WISDOM FROM ABOVE, of which the Apostle so highly predicates, is, we see, the same as *Wisdom revealed immediately from Heaven*; but, descending to Man, is adapted to the capacity of his Powers. So that *heavenly* and *earthly* wisdom have this in common, to be COMMUNICABLE, that is, TO BE UNDERSTOOD. For to communicate nonsense, which is a nothing, is no communication. When therefore we find a pretender to inspiration, such as JACOB BEHMEN, delivering to us, under this Character, a heap of unmeaning, or, what amounts to the same thing, unintelligible words, we reasonably conclude, that if indeed, this *Wisdom* did come from above, it hath so degenerated

nerated in its way down, as to be ever unfit to return; but muſt be content, with the other lapſed Entities of celeſtial original, to ſeek employment amongſt fools and knaves, here below. Nor will the Apology of his illuminated Diſciple (4), in his book called *The Way to divine Knowlege*, at all mend the matter. "When "Jacob, (ſays he) like Elijah, in his FIERY "CHARIOT, is caught up into ſuch heights, "and ſees and relates ſuch things as I cannot "yet comprehend, I love and reverence him "for being where I never was, and ſeeing ſuch "things as he cannot make me ſee; juſt as I "love and reverence St. Paul, &c. (5)" The compariſon, we ſee, is honourable; tho' leſs ap-

(4) Mr. William Law.

(5) *The way to* DIVINE KNOWLEDGE, &c. p. 88. —Mr. John Weſley indeed, tho' no enemy to theſe ſuperb Vehicles, ſpeaks very diſreſpectfully of Jacob's *fiery Chariot*: "I can and muſt ſay thus much [of his "Myſterium magnum] and that with as full evi- "dence, as I can ſay that two and two make four, "it is moſt ſublime nonſenſe, inimitable bombaſt, "fuſtian not to be paralleled. *Journal from Sept.* "3, 1741, to *Oct.* 27, 1743."—Another writer, who had the beſt means of being well informed, aſſures us, that this *fiery Chariot* was not of Jewiſh but of German conſtruction. "Jac. Böhmius Sutor Görlicenſis "—Hic cum natura ipſa proclivis eſſet ad res abditas "perveſtigandas, et Rob. Fluddii ac Roſæcruciano- "rum ſcita cognoviſſet, Theologiam, *igne duce*, ima- "ginatione comite invenit, ipſis Pythagoricis nu- "meris et Heracliti notis obſcuriorem—ita enim "Chymicis imaginationibus et tanta verborum con- "fuſione et caligine omnia miſcet, ut ipſe ſibi obſtre- "pere videatur." *J. L. Moſheimii Inſt. Hiſt. Eccl. ant. & recent.*

poſite

poſite than one could wiſh: For here lies the difference between *Jacob* and *Paul:* The *Roſe-crucian* talks largely of what he knew his reader could not underſtand; and the *Apoſtle*, as Maſter of himſelf, tho' not of his Subject, more ſagely obſerves a religious ſilence (6). But ſo will not Mr. *William Law*, who is Maſter of neither. And who, without the *bleſſed Jacob*'s *fiery Chariot*, can ſoar like him to the lunar region of loſt intellects; from whence he brings us theſe curioſities,—*a hungry, wrathful, material fire—ſpiritual materiality*—a mirrour *of ſound —wrath turned into Sun and Stars—darkneſs into Earth*—and *mobility into Air:* And informs us of theſe ſecrets, that *life is deſire*; that *rage is the cauſe of hardneſs in a flint*; *meekneſs, of fluidity in water*; that *earthly ſerpents are but tranſitory out-births of covetouſneſs, envy, pride and wrath*; and laſtly, that *body is only coagulated* or curdled *ſpirit:* with much more to the ſame purpoſe, that would diſgrace even Bedlam at full moon.

CHAP. VII.

HAVING ſhewn this *Wiſdom* to be, in its nature, COMMUNICABLE, and ſo, cut off all the bold pretenſions of theſe MYSTICS, we come to what St. James makes its firſt and eſſential quality; *The wiſdom from above*, ſays he, *is* FIRST, PURE. πρῶτον μὲν ἁγνή ἐστιν—

(6) ἄῤῥητα ῥήματα ἃ οὐκ ἐξὸν ἀνθρώπῳ λαλῆσαι. 1 Cor. xii. 4.

i. e.

i. e. *pure*, both from *carnal* and *ſpiritual* pollution. Now as Mr. *Wm. Law* begot METHODISM (7), and Count *Zinzendorf* rocked the Cradle, it may not be improper, firſt of all, to examine *their* pretenſions to this eſſential quality of heavenly wiſdom, *purity*.

As *purity* reſpects *practice*, thoſe followers of the Count, the MORAVIANS, give us little trouble. For to paſs by their open *Hymn-book*, a heap of blaſphemous and beaſtly nonſenſe; if we may give credit to the yet unconfuted relations both in Print and in MS, (compoſed by their own Members, the Participants of their moſt ſacred myſteries) their practices in the conſummation of marriage, or as their Ritual calls it, the *Marriage Occonomy*, are ſo horribly, ſo unſpeakably flagitious (8), that this People ſeems to have no more pretence to be put into the number of Chriſtian Sects than the

(7) "Meeting with Mr. *Law's Chriſtian Perfection* "*and ſerious Call*—the light flowed in ſo mightily on "my ſoul, that every thing appeared in a new View, "&c. &c." *Journ. from Feb.* 1, 1737-8, *to his return from Germany*, *p.* 29.

(8) Mr. J. Weſley, in a *melancholy account*, which, he ſays, he received of theſe Wretches at *Bedford*, inſerts the following particular—"Mr. Rimius has "ſaid nothing to what might have been ſaid con- "cerning their MARRIAGE OECONOMY. I know "[ſaith the informer] a hundred times more than "he has written. But the particulars are too ſhock- "ing to relate. I believe no ſuch things were ever "practiſed before, no not amongſt the moſt barbarous "Heathens." *Journ. from July* 20, 1750, to *Oct.* 28, 1754. p. 74.

TUR-

TURLUPINS of the thirteenth Century; a vagabond crew of miſcreants, who rambled over Italy, France, and Germany, under the title of *Brothers and Siſters of the free Spirit*; Who, in ſpeculation, profeſſed that ſpecies of Atheiſm, called *Pantheiſm*; and, in practice, claimed an *exemption* from all the obligations of morality and religion.

The BEHMENISTS, indeed, have not extended the FREEDOM of their *Spirit* to this length; yet the Leader of the ſect, amongſt us, tho' manifeſting an exemplary abhorrence of all *carnal impurity*, has fallen into the loweſt dregs of the *Spiritual*; and hath written a large diſcourſe to recommend PANTHEISM, a Doctrine ſo much ennobled by the *Turlupins*, of the thirteenth Century; ſo learnedly explained by the Carteſian Spinoſiſts, and ſo politicly concealed by the Chineſe Virtuoſi: Which teaches, that there is but one univerſal Subſtance exiſting, of which, the Creature and Creator (if, after this, they are to be diſtinguiſhed) participate in common. The general principles of this unhappy Philoſophy, the Reader may find in the note below (9).

But

(9) "It is the ſame impoſſibility for a thing to be "created *out of* nothing, as to be created *by* nothing. "It is no more a part or prerogative of God's omni- "potence to create a Being out of nothing, than to "make a thing to be without any one quality of "Being, in it —Every creature is nothing elſe than "NATURE put into a certain form of exiſtence." *An appeal to all that doubt or diſbelieve the truths of the Goſpel*, by W. Law, M. A. 1742, p. 8.

"That

But next to this *impurity* of fanatic *Wisdom* which sets NATURE in the throne of GOD, is that

" That which thinks and wills in the soul, is that " VERY SAME unbeginning breath which thought " and willed in God, before it was breathed into the " form of a human soul; and therefore it is, that " Will and Thought cannot be bounded.—The " essences of the soul were a breath in God before " they became a living soul, they lived in God before " they lived in the created soul; and therefore the " soul is a partaker of the eternity of God, and can " never cease to be." P. 10.

" The creation of a soul is the bringing the powers " of thinking and willing out of their eternal state in " the one God, into a beginning state of self-conscious " life, distinct from God. And this is God's omni- " potent creating ability, that he can make the powers " of his own nature become creatural, living personal " images of what he is in himself, in a state of " DISTINCT PERSONALITY from him." P. 12.

" It is no more a property of the divine omnipo- " tence to be able to annihilate a soul, than to be able " to make an eternal truth become a fiction of yester- " day. And to think it a lessening of the power of " God, to say, that he cannot annihilate the soul, is " as absurd as to say, that it is a lessening of the light " of the Sun, if it cannot destroy or darken its own " rays of light." P. 17.

" To suppose this or any other MATERIAL world " to be made out of nothing, has all the same absur- " dities in it as the supposing angels and spirits to be " created out of nothing. All the qualities of all " Beings are eternal.—All qualities, properties, or " whatever can be affirmed of God, are self-existent " and necessarily-existent. Self and necessary ex- " istence is not a particular attribute of God, but is " the general nature of every thing that can be af- " firmed of God. All qualities and properties are

" self-

that other, which separates REASON from GRACE. It is "a point we CHIEFLY INSIST "UPON, (says Mr. J. Wesley, the pillar and "ground of *Methodism*) that orthodoxy or "RIGHT OPINION is, at best, but a very slen-"der part of Religion, IF ANY PART OF IT "AT ALL (1)." Here we see REASON is, as it were, discarded from the service of RELIGION, and from its attendance on GRACE: tho' one part of the office of the Holy Spirit be *to lead us into all truth*. For when Reason is no longer employed to distinguish between *right* and *wrong* in *Opinions*, Religion hath no further connexion with it. And what occasion for

"self-existent in God.—It follows undeniably that "EVERY CREATED THING MUST HAVE ITS "WHOLE NATURE FROM, AND OUT OF, THE "DIVINE NATURE." P. 23, 24.

"Properly and strictly speaking nothing CAN BEGIN "to be. The beginning of every thing is nothing "more than its beginning to be in a *new state*.—No "quality or power of nature then began to be; but "such qualities and powers as had been from all eter-"nity began then to be in a *new state*. Ask what "fire, light, darkness, air, water, and earth are; "They are and can be nothing else but some ETER-"NAL THINGS, BECOME gross, finite, measurable, "divisible, and transitory: For if there could be a "temporal fire that did not spring out of eternal fire, "then there might be time that did not come out of "eternity." P. 114, 115.

"Will any one now call these things *whimsical spe-"culations?* Can any thing be thought of, more "WORTHY of God, more CONFORMABLE to Nature, "or more CONSONANT to all revealed Religion?" P. 118.

(1) Mr. J. Wesley's *Plain account*, &c. p. 4.

its

its ſervice when the diſtinction, we are told, is of ſo little conſequence? And yet if we once agree to *ſeparate* Reaſon from Religion, *Piety* will ſoon degenerate into Superſtition or Fanaticiſm. But the Piety of the firſt ages had a different eſſence: It was then the glory of the Goſpel to be a *reaſonable Service*. By this quality it was diſtinguiſhed from the various modes of Gentile Worſhip, which entirely conſiſted in the fanatic Raptures of their Prophets, and the Superſtitious Rites of their Prieſts. Articles of belief or a formula of Faith, they left to thoſe Innovators who had now pretended to bring in *Reaſon* for the regulation of Religion; *orthodox or right Opinion being* (on the principles of theſe antient Maſters of the Mob, the ſupporters of Paganiſm) *at beſt but a very ſlender part of Religion, if any part of it at all.* On the other hand, St. PAUL conſidered *right Opinion* as a full third part at leaſt, of Religion; where ſpeaking of the three great ſupports which the Maſter-builder, the HOLY SPIRIT, had provided for the Chriſtian-Church, he makes this, of *right opinion*, to be one. *The fruit of the Spirit* (ſays he) *is in all* GOODNESS *and* RIGHTEOUSNESS *and* TRUTH (2). For by *Goodneſs* (3) is meant the conduct of Particulars to the Whole; and conſiſts in the exemplary habits of *ſocial* virtue: And this refers to CHRISTIAN PRACTICE. By *righteouſneſs* (4) is meant the conduct of the Whole to Particulars; and conſiſts in that equal gentleneſs of Government, where Church-Authority is made to coincide with the private

(2) Eph. v. 9. (3) Ἀγαθωσύνη.
(4) Δικαιοσύνη.

rights

rights of Conſcience; and this refers to CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE. And by *Truth* (5) is meant the conduct of the Whole and of Particulars to one another, mutually; and conſiſts in *Orthodoxy* or *right Opinion*; and this refers to CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE. So different an Idea had St. Paul of RELIGION from what this over-zealous man hath been led to entertain of it. No leſs was the difference, which the firſt *Reformers* from the errors of Popery, entertained of it; who, for the ſake of *right opinion*, occaſioned ſo many revolutions in *Civil* as well as in *ſpiritual* Syſtems; the perverſity of men turning, as it had before done, the meſſage of *peace* into a *ſword* (6). How much then had all theſe to anſwer for, if *right opinion be at beſt but a ſlender part of Religion, if any part of it at all.* Without doubt, Mr. Weſley has, by this declaration, provided well for the fortune of his own Sect, amongſt all denominations of Chriſtians. But what obligations the Church of England (of which he profeſſes himſelf a member) has unto him for thus ſhortening the labours of the Popiſh Miſſionaries, he would do well to conſider. Such eſcapes as theſe, I ſuppoſe, they were, which occaſioned the reports of his preaching *Popery* to his Followers; a calumny of which he bitterly complains: And not without reaſon: For to do him juſtice, I believe he has as little regard to the intereſts of Popery as any of his hearers; and as much to his Own: The truth ſeems to be this. He could not find

(5) Ἀλήθεια.

(6) Matt. x. 34. *Think not that I am come to ſend peace on earth, I came not to ſend peace, but a ſword.*

a better

a better mean of securing the honour of his own pretensions than by this extraordinary declaration. He saw the exact resemblance there is between his Saints and those of the Church of Rome, at the time of the NEW BIRTH. This might lead reflecting men to conclude, that the Original of both was the same. Yet as the Popish and Protestant opinions, or Articles of faith, are very opposite to one another, the God of Truth, (while *Truth* was supposed to constitute a principal part of Religion) could never be believed to have any thing to do with the *new birth*, whether popish or protestant. Nothing then was left for those who had deserted *Nature*, but to ascribe both to *Enthusiasm* or *Demonianism*. To avoid this disgrace, Mr. Wesley rather chuses to let Popery share with him in the glory of divine communications, and expressly vouches for the Miracles wrought at the tomb of *Abbé Paris* (7). Now this concession could be no otherwise supported than by inculcating the notion, That errors in Faith have so little to do with Religion, that they are no barr or impediment to the highest favours of the Holy Spirit. *It is the point* (says he) *we chiefly insist upon, that Orthodoxy or right opinion is at best but a very slender part of Religion, if any part of it at all.* Great reason likewise had he to INSIST ON THIS POINT, on another account, namely the Character he hath given of his own Saints. "The more, says he, I converse with "this People, the more I am amazed. That "God hath wrought a great work is manifest.

(7) Journ. from July 20, 1749, to Oct. 30, 1751. p. 23.

"And

"And yet the main of them—are not able to "give a *rational account of the plainest principles* "*of Religion.*" Nor is this observation confined to the People. He had made a proselyte of Mr. D. vicar of B. And to shew he was no discredit to his Master, he delivers him to us under this Character—"He seemed to stagger "at nothing; tho' as yet his *understanding is* "*not opened* (8)." He then attempts at the Cause of this strange Phenomenon. "It is "plain, God begins his work at the *Heart*; "Then the inspiration of the Highest giveth "*understanding* (9)." But this solution, tho' it be in Scripture language, is neither Scripture doctrine nor history. In the first propagation of Religion, God began with the *understanding*; and rational conviction won the *heart*. When the Holy Ghost fell on the Disciples at the day of Pentecost, *the devout men of every nation under heaven* heard them speak in their own tongues. —But what? Not the jargon of fanatic movements, but the *wonderful works of God*, i. e. they heard them give a rational account of the various parts of God's religious Dispensations to Mankind. It was just the same on all other occasions: When the Spirit first fell upon Believers, they *prophesied*; that is, they explained the Scriptures of the Prophets. But the dissension amongst the Corinthians sets this matter in the clearest light, and shews that the *first* effect of inspiration is to *give understanding*. Their

(8) Journ. from July 20, 1750, to Oct. 28, 1754. p. 11.

(9) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746, to July 20, 1750. p. 121.

under-

underſtanding was ſo inlarged by all ſpiritual gifts, that the work not having been begun at the *heart*, they abuſed theſe advantages to the violation of Charity. But, for this diſcordancy, between *his* Miſſion and St. Paul's, he has a ſalvo: He obſerves occaſionally, in ſeveral places of his journal, "that God *now* not only "does a *new work*, but by *new ways*." This ſolution of our ſpiritual Empiric, puts one in mind of the Quack in Moliere, who having placed the *liver* on the left ſide, and the *heart* on the right, and being told that the ſtructure of the parts was certainly otherwiſe, replied, Oui, cela étoit autre fois ainſi; mais nous avons changé tout cela, & nous faiſons maintenant la médecine d'une methode toute nouvelle.—But tho' he talks of the *underſtanding* coming after, this is only to put off his *babes of grace*, to *latter lammas:* Which he has plainly enough inſinuated in a parallel between the WORK carried on in England and in America. "I now (ſays "he) looked over Mr. Prince's *Chriſtian Hiſ-* "*tory*. What an amazing difference is there "in the manner wherein God has carried on "his *work* in England and in America! *There*, "above an hundred of the eſtabliſhed Clergy, "men of age and experience, and of the greateſt "note for ſenſe and learning in thoſe parts, are "zealouſly engaged in the *work*. *Here*, almoſt "the whole Body of the aged, experienced and "learned clergy are zealouſly engaged againſt "it: A few, but a handful of raw young men, "engaged in it; without name, learning, or "EMINENT SENSE! And yet by that large "number of honourable men the *work* ſeldom "flouriſhed above ſix months at a time; and

" then followed a lamentable and general de-
" cay, before the next revival of it: Whereas
" that which God hath wrought by these de-
" spised instruments hath continually increased
" for fifteen years together (1)." Now, what is this but to tell us, that the *understanding hath* nothing, and *will have* nothing, to do in the WORK?

On the whole, therefore, we conclude, That that *Wisdom* which divests the Christian Faith of its *Truth*, and the test of this Truth, *Reason*, and resolves all into internal feelings, into mystic spiritualism, and extatic raptures, instead of giving it the manly support of MORAL DEMONSTRATION, That this, I say, can never be *the wisdom which is from above*, whose characteristic attribute is *Purity*. Thus, on a fair trial, these illuminated Doctors have, at their very first entrance, excluded themselves from their high pretensions: Principles like these always coming from *Spiritual impurity:* and often leading, as we have seen, into the very sink of the *carnal*.

CHAP. VIII.

BUT now, had it been our good fortune to have found the matter otherwise; and that the *Wisdom* enquired after, had rested upon that foundation on which *celestial Wisdom* must ne-

(1) Journ. from July 20, 1750, to Oct. 28, 1754. p. 43.

cessarily

ceſſarily ſtand, (and this it might well do, tho' it came not immediately from the Fountain-head of Purity; as the *unbroken Ciſterns* of Holy Writ were amply ſufficient to ſupply theſe *living waters*) our next buſineſs would be to proſecute the inquiry, and to apply the other apoſtolic marks to theſe pretending Sectaries.

Of theſe marks, the firſt only (which has been ſo amply diſcuſs'd) namely *purity*, reſpects the NATURE of the *Wiſdom* from above; or, in other words, *the Doctrines* taught. All the reſt, which follow, concern the MANNER of teaching, or the Conduct of the Teachers. We are not therefore to ſtop ſhort in our enquiry, becauſe we may have found that the mark of *purity* has anſwered to the touch; tho' Mr. J. Weſley (who aſſures us that he preaches nothing but the doctrine of the Church of England) thinks this ſufficient to ſatisfy all reaſonable men concerning his conduct. "I ſimply deſcribed (ſays he) the *plain old Religion of the Church of England*, which is now almoſt every where ſpoken againſt, under the name of METHODISM (2)." If *Methodiſm* be *ſpoken againſt*, thoſe who cenſure it, could mean neither an *old* nor a *new* Religion, ſince the word ſignifies only the *manner of propagating* either one or the other. And, of all men, Mr. Weſley ſhould beſt know the meaning of the term; ſince it was not a nick-name impoſed on the Sect by its enemies, but an appellation of honour aſſumed by, and beſtowed upon, them-

(2) Journ. from Auguſt 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 9.

ſelves. If therefore they preach only *the plain old Religion of the Church of England*, they could mean nothing, by *Methodiſm*, but the *manner of preaching* it; for the thing itſelf needed no other name of diſtinction than that which it had already. Why then will Mr. J. Weſley ſo groſly miſrepreſent his Adverſaries as to ſay, that when they *ſpeak againſt Methodiſm*, they *ſpeak againſt the plain old Doctrine of the Church of England?* ſince he himſelf has taught them to call *methodiſm* (and they might well have called it by a harder name) the *manner*, in which he and his followers attempt to propagate this *plain old Religion*.

However, ſtrip him of his prevarication and his ſophiſtry, and we find him plainly enough declaring, "That the *manner* of preaching, ſo it be *truth* which is preached, ought to give no offence." And, to this purpoſe, he relates the following converſation: "A ſerious Clergy-"man deſired to know, In what point we dif-"fered from the Church of England? I an-"ſwered, To the beſt of my knowlege, in "none. The Doctrines we preach are the "Doctrines of the Church of England. In-"deed, the fundamental doctrines of the "Church, clearly laid down both in her Pray-"ers, Articles, and Homilies (3)."

Be this never ſo true, yet it will ſtill be as true that the moſt holy things may be depraved, in paſſing thro' impure hands; and that, RIGHT

(3) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p 81.

OPI-

OPINION, which inſpires wiſdom and promotes peace, may then ſerve for nothing but to turn the heads and hearts of men to folly and diſſention, otherwiſe naturally framed and diſpoſed to profit by the truth. Indeed, a FANATIC MANNER of preaching, tho' it were the doctrine of an Apoſtle, may do more harm, to Society at leaſt, than a modeſt revival of *old* ſpeculative hereſies, or, than the invention of *new*; ſince it tends to bewilder the Reaſon of ſome, to inflame the Paſſions of others; and, in that ſtate of things, to ſpread diſorder and diſturbance throughout the whole Community. And in ſubjection to the civil Community was the Goſpel firſt preached; and under the protection of it was it, at length, every where eſtabliſhed. For, what does FIELD-PREACHING (for inſtance) imply, but a *famine of the Word*, occaſioned by a total neglect in the ſpiritual Paſtors appointed by Law? And what can it produce, but ſtrong reſentments in behalf of the Miniſters of Religion, thus injuriouſly treated? What can be the iſſue of the NEW BIRTH, attended with thoſe infernal throes and frightful agitations ſo graphically deſcribed in the Journals of Mr. J. Weſley, but high ferments in behalf of Religion itſelf, thus ſcandalouſly diſhonoured and traduced.

The ſacred Writer himſelf, who delivered this TEST for the trial of theſe Mens pretenſions, was unqueſtionably in theſe ſentiments, "that a *fanatic* Spirit did more miſchief in the *mode* of teaching, than an *erroneous* one, in the *matter* taught;" ſince, of half a dozen marks recommended for this purpoſe, the firſt only is

applicable to the *doctrine*; all the reſt concern the *manners* of the Teacher.

Nay, what is more, we have Mr. J. Weſley himſelf, for once, on the ſide of the Apoſtle, where he ſays, that *it is a point he chiefly inſiſts upon, that* ORTHODOXY *or* RIGHT OPINION *is, at beſt, but a very ſlender part of Religion, if any part of it at all.* The Operation of Religion on the heart therefore, (which with him is the ſame as on the fancy, and manifeſts itſelf in corporeal agitations) is the principal point. But *this*, altogether reſolves itſelf into the *manner* of propagating the Faith.

Yet ſtill it may be diſputed, Who it is that becomes anſwerable for the diſorders occaſioned by this *new mode* or *method* of propagating Religion? Is it Mr. J. Weſley, or is it his Adverſaries? He, I make no queſtion, will exculpate himſelf by the direction of St. Paul to Timothy —*to preach the word, in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon.* Which implies, he thinks, that the *manner* can never be amiſs, or made chargeable with blame.

But he would infer more from the Text than it will bear; and miſapply it, into the bargain. This direction relates to *time* only, which is but one of the many circumſtances attending the *manner of preaching*; and *that one*, in which the abuſe is leaſt material.—The application (as we ſay) is no leſs faulty. The direction is confined to the ſtate of things *then* exiſting; when the ſuffering Church had ſo few opportunities to preach the word, that all, whether *ſeaſonable* or *unſeaſonable*, were with reaſon to be laid

laid hold on. When the Church was once eſtabliſhed, and *fixed* and *ſeaſonable* times were appointed for holy offices, then (as every one may ſee) to fly to the *unſeaſonable* would be factious, and a breach of the diſcipline of that Church, of which the tranſgreſſor profeſſed himſelf a member. To judge, therefore, of the integrity of Mr. J. Weſley's conduct, we muſt turn from the directions which St. Paul gives *for his own times*, to thoſe which St. James gives *for all times*.

CHAP. IX.

AND this leads us on, in our Enquiry. The Wiſdom from above (ſays this Apoſtle) *is firſt pure, then* PEACEABLE.—To be PEACEABLE is a leading quality in its general Character. A Choir of Angels uſhered in the Advent of the Son of God, with *peace, good-will towards men* (1). And He himſelf, on his departure from us, bequeathed it to us, as his deareſt legacy: *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you* (2). Now that which the FATHER proclaimed, which the SON beſtowed, muſt needs be of the office of the HOLY GHOST to maintain. Whatever *form of godlineſs*, therefore, hath not this Characteriſtic mark, can never reaſonably be deemed of heavenly extraction.

(1) Luke ii. 14. (2) John xiv. 27.

That the propagation of *Methodiſm* hath occaſioned many and great violations of *peace*, Mr. Weſley hath amply ſhewn in the journalary hiſtory of his Adventures.

But as in all conteſts between party and party, the blame is reciprocally thrown upon one another; before we come more directly to adjuſt the ſhare which may be fairly caſt upon *Methodiſm*, it may be uſeful previouſly to inquire into that *temper which makes for peace*; for we may be reaſonably well aſſured, that the fault lieth not in that quarter where ſuch a temper is found. Now our bleſſed Redeemer, who ſo earneſtly recommends *his peace* to us, hath given us directions how to preſerve it—*Be ye therefore wiſe* [φρόνιμοι, PRUDENT] *as Serpents and harmleſs as Doves* (3).

And he, who gave his Followers no precept, regarding life and manners, which he did not eminently recommend by his own example, was the moſt perfect pattern of *innocence*, under the direction of PRUDENCE; as appears in his dextrous evaſions to captious queſtions of the Jewiſh Leaders, who wanted matter to inflame the people againſt him; in his avoiding the People, when thus inflamed; and above all, in his declining an untimely promulgation of his *Meſſiah-Character*; which would either have occaſioned civil commotions, or have endangered his life before he had compleated his Miniſtry. The firſt inſtance of this conſummate *prudence* is

(3) Matt. x. 16. So again, *Who is that faithful and wiſe* [Φρόνιμος, *prudent*] *Servant?* Matt. xxiv. 45.

too

too important not to be more particularly explained. "There came to him (says St. Mark) "the Chief Priests and Scribes, and the Elders, "and say unto him, By what authority dost "thou these things? and who gave thee this "authority? And Jesus answered and said unto "them, I will also ask of you one question, "and answer me, and I will tell you by what "authority I do these things. The baptism of "John, was it from Heaven, or of Men? an-"swer me. And they reasoned with them-"selves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; "he will say, Why then did ye not believe "him? But if we shall say, Of men; they "feared the People: For all men counted John "that he was a Prophet indeed. And they "answered and said unto Jesus, We cannot "tell. And Jesus answering, saith unto them, "Neither do I tell you, by what authority I "do these things (4)."

A direct answer to this question, apparently reasonable, and urged by those who had authority to demand it, must have immaturely revealed what the destined Ministry of Jesus made necessary to be kept secret. And yet, to evade the question, in such a manner as was sufficient to satisfy Authority, needed all that divine prudence with which the Author of our Salvation was endowed. He therefore replies, "First, "answer me this question concerning John." The question was reasonable, considered in the view of an argument *ad hominem*; it was reasonable, from the force it had in itself: For if

(4) Ch. xi. 27, *& seq.*

it ſhould appear, that that queſtion had not been determined in the caſe of John, it was evident from their own conduct, that the juriſdiction of the Sanhedrim was not violated by any man's declining to anſwer one of the ſame import. Further, the queſtion was reaſonable and proper in itſelf. John publicly profeſſed himſelf the forerunner of Jeſus: So that if it were neceſſary for the Sanhedrim to come at the true knowlege of the general Caſe, they ſhould have begun with John. This, the natural order of a judicial proceeding required. Nor would the Chief Prieſts have been backward to anſwer it, in either view. But here lay the difficulty; the People were of one opinion concerning John, and the Sanhedrim of another. This embarras ſilenced them. And in our Saviour's taking advantage of that circumſtance conſiſts the divine dexterity of his exemplary prudence. *Neither do I tell you* (ſays he) *by what authority I do theſe things.* As much as to ſay, "Both on my principles and on your own, a previous queſtion is firſt to be reſolved, namely, concerning *the baptiſm of John.* When you have anſwered this, then comes my time to anſwer yours: But till then, you have no right to inſiſt upon an anſwer."—Such inſtances of Prudence, and ſo divinely managed, made St. Paul, where in his Epiſtle to the Epheſians he diſtinguiſhes (in the twofold Character of the bleſſed Jeſus) between his office of *Redeemer* from Sin, and *Preacher* of Righteouſneſs, expreſs his latter office in theſe emphatic words, *He hath abounded towards us in all wiſdom and* PRUDENCE (5),

(5) Ch. i. 8.

σοφία

σοφία καὶ φρονήσει. Which, as appears by what follows, the Apoſtle makes to conſiſt in his Maſter's ſuiting and adapting the various Revelations of his Will to the peculiar ſeaſons and occaſions when the knowlege of it was become uſeful to the furtherance of the Faith. *Having* (ſays St. Paul) *made known unto us the Myſtery of his will according to his good pleaſure, which he hath purpoſed in himſelf; that in the diſpenſation of the fulneſs of time he might gather together in one, all things in Chriſt, &c.* By which the Apoſtle ſeems principally to have in mind that obſcure and backward intimation, which, for ſome time, kept hid from his Diſciples this *myſtery of his will*; the uſual title given by the ſacred Writers to the calling in of the Gentiles into the Church of Chriſt. The *prudence* of which conduct is obvious. The Goſpel was to be firſt offered to the Jews. But their reception of it was ſo unkind, that, had the Apoſtles been then acquainted with this *Myſtery*, they had been tempted to turn to the Gentiles, before the miſſion to the Jews had been fairly compleated. When that was accompliſhed, the *myſtery* was revealed, in all its ſplendor, to St. Peter.

On the whole, therefore, we ſee, that THE PEACEFUL CHARACTER IS THAT, WHERE INNOCENCE IS UNDER THE DIRECTION OF PRUDENCE. Emancipated from this direction, *Innocence* becomes a prey both to itſelf and to others; and is, either actively or paſſively, the perpetual ſource of Diſcord.

Let us ſee, now, the regard our new Miſſionaries *profeſs to pay* to this precept and ex-

ample of their Maſter. HUMAN PRUDENCE has, ſome how or other, ſo highly offended Mr. J. Weſley, that he ſcruples not to call it, the MYSTERY OF INIQUITY and the OFFSPRING OF HELL.—"I believe (ſays "he) it pleaſed God to bleſs the firſt Sermon "moſt, becauſe it gave moſt offence, being "indeed an open defiance of that *myſtery* "*of Iniquity* which the World calls PRU-"DENCE (6)." As he here informs us, Who gave it that Name, one might be apt to ſuppoſe he meant, the *Prudence* of the *unjuſt Steward*, which is indeed the *myſtery of Iniquity*, did not he himſelf forbid us to underſtand it in this ſenſe, by fairly telling us that he meant, what the *World* calls CHRISTIAN *Prudence*. And as bad as the *World* is, I think it never qualified the *prudence* of the *unjuſt Steward* with that attribute.—"God deliver me, and all that "ſeek him in ſincerity, from what the World "calls CHRISTIAN PRUDENCE (7)." And again, to a friend who approved not of his *field-preaching*, "——I fear that *offspring of Hell*, "worldly or myſtic PRUDENCE, hath drawn "you away from the ſimplicity of the Goſ-"pel (8)." If his averſion to *Prudence* be thus great, his enmity to thoſe, amongſt whom it is uſually found, can ſcarce be thought leſs, from the hard words he gives whenever he ſpeaks of them.——"Mrs. Baddiley (ſays he) "deſired me to go up to her Son, who had

(6) Journ. from Feb. 1, 1737-8, to his return from Germany, p. 12.

(7) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 13.

(8) Ibid. p. 56, 57.

"been

" been out of order for ſome days. For a " year or two he was a pattern to all the " family, till he began to converſe more with " GOOD SORT OF MEN. He then grew cooler " and cooler in the ways of God, and in a " few months quitted the Society (9)."—" It " is abſolutely needful for ſuch a one as me " to follow the wiſe adviſe of Mr. Herbert " —And this, I bleſs God, I can, in ſome " meaſure, do, while I avoid that BANE OF " ALL RELIGION, the Company of GOOD " SORT OF MEN, as they are called, Perſons " who have a liking to, but no SENSE of, " Religion." [i. e. no extatic feelings or the pains of the *new birth*, &c.] " But theſe in- " ſenſibly undermine all my reſolution, and " ſteal away what little ZEAL I have (1)." i. e. perſuade him to be *peaceable*.

And again, ſpeaking of one of his Back-ſliders, he ſays—" but indulging himſelf in HARMLESS COMPANY he firſt made ſhipwreck of his ZEAL, and then of his FAITH (2)." In this I think he is right. The *Zeal* and the *Faith* of a FANATIC are ſuch exact tallies to one another that I have no conception how either can exiſt alone. They came into the World together to diſturb Society and diſhonour Chriſtianity; and they muſt go out

(9) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746, to July 20, 1750. p. 31.
(1) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 31.
(2) Journ. from his embarking for Georgia, to his return to London, p. 41.

together

together before the One can regain its peace, or the Other its dignity.

On the whole, we find that Mr. J. Wesley is, by his own confession, entirely destitute of that temper *which makes for peace:* If therefore his preaching be attended with tumults and disorders, we cannot but ascribe it to the want of that quality, which the Founders of our holy Religion made essential to the successful propagation of the *Gospel of Peace*, namely, PRUDENCE. It is true, Mr. Wesley, as we have seen, throws the whole fault of these tumults on the DEVIL; and this may be allowed him in the sense that every paultry Pilferer and Sabbath-breaker is used to do. But if we seek for the more immediate cause, we shall find it much nearer hand. The Roman Satirist pretended,

——Nullum Numen abest, si sit PRUDENTIA,

Where PRUDENCE governs, *no God is wanting to keep the world in order.* We may say, with more sobriety and truth, that where IMPRUDENCE takes the lead, there needs no *Devil* to throw it into confusion. What, for instance, more strongly tends to tumult and disorder than for One who professes to propagate only the *plain old Religion of the Church of England*, to set at nought its established Discipline, by invading the province of the parochial Minister; by assembling in undue places and at unfit times; by *speaking evil of Dignities*, in scurrilous invectives against the Governors and Pastors of the national Church? Insolences of this na-

ture provoke warm and ill-inſtructed men to demand juſtice on the offenders: Which not being at hand, (as the intereſts of Society will not, always, permit the Magiſtrate to enforce it, where the inſults on his office are covered with the pretences of Religion) Particulars are but too apt to ſeek that in a tumultuary and criminal way, which all the providence of Government, and all the equity of Law, are but barely ſufficient to adjuſt, with ſuch diſcretion, as, that while the dignity of the State is vindicated, the rights of Religion are not infringed.

Nor will that fanatic Apology, which is ever at hand, be any excuſe for them in the commiſſion of their diſorders; namely, "That the violation *of peace amongſt men* ſerves to advance the *peace of God*; our bleſſed Maſter having himſelf declared, that *he was not come to ſend Peace on earth, but a ſword.*" Now the ſame Spirit which diſpoſes them to apply to their own caſe all thoſe declarations concerning the firſt extraordinary ſtate of the Goſpel, hinders them from ſeeing, that theſe words of Jeſus reſpect only the accidental and tranſient ſtruggle of the then expiring Powers of darkneſs; but that the heavenly Proclamation of *peace towards men*, declares the genuine and conſtant fruits of *God's good-will to* his Creatures: that the *firſt* only predicted the early fortunes of a ſuffering Church; and that the *other* deſcribed the eſſential nature, the eternal genius, of an all-beneficent Religion. But Enthuſiaſts, hurried on by the fervours of an inflamed fancy, loſe ſight of a Chriſtian land,

and

and a believing Magiſtrate; and have nothing before their eyes but a Country of Pagans and Idolaters, with the Princes of this world riſen up to ſuppreſs and perſecute the *Word of life*. Under theſe deluſions, it is no wonder that they deſpiſe order, inſult Government, and ſet their Rulers at defiance.

But PEACE is the cure of FANATICISM, as *Fanaticiſm* is the bane of *Peace*. Sectaries muſt either kick or be kicked. They muſt either perſecute, or they muſt provoke perſecution. To be in this turbulent ſtate is living in their proper element.

As every *Libertine* aſpires to be on the *laughing* ſide, ſo every *Zealot* would fain be on the *perſecuting*. But Zealots, as well as other Adventurers, muſt take their chance in this world, whatſoever ſecurity they have made for the other. We ſee METHODISM, at preſent, under a well eſtabliſhed, watchful Government, where it is obliged to wear a leſs audacious look. To know its true character, and native diſpoſition, we ſhould ſee it in all its fortunes. And this our own Country, productive of every ſtrange thing, hath given us ample means to contemplate. For They, who now go under the name of METHODISTS, were, in the days of our Fore-fathers, called PRECISIANS; terms of their own deviſing, and (as the fruits of the ſame ſpirit) nearly ſynonimous, importing that the bearers of them had carefully ſquared out their Religion by line and level. The *elder Methodiſm*, on its firſt appearance, put on the ſame ſuffering exterior, which we

ſee the younger Brother wear at preſent. During the firm adminiſtration of Elizabeth it diſguiſed, and but barely diſguiſed, its native ferocity, in a feigned ſubmiſſion; after having invited perſecution with the air of a perſecutor. Thoſe times, we may be ſure, would not ſuffer it to wait long for what it wanted. And then, as a precious Metal, which had undergone its trial in the fire, and left all its droſs behind, the Sect, with great propriety, changed its name, from PRECISIAN to PURITAN. But in the weak and diſtracted times of Charles the Iſt, it ventured to throw off the maſk; and, under the new name of INDEPENDENT, became the chief Agent of all the dreadful diſorders which terminated that unhappy reign. For INDEPENDENCY was a name as well ſuited to the weakneſs of that Government, which it defied and overturned, as METHODISM is to the ſtrength of This, of which it ſtands in awe. Nor is this Pedigree, which makes *Methodiſm* of the younger Houſe to *Independency*, invented, like heraldic fictions, to ennoble my ſubject. Whoever reads the large accounts of the *Spiritual ſtate of the Regicides* while under condemnation, (written and publiſhed, at that time, by their friends, to make them paſs, with the People, for Saints and Martyrs) and compares them with the circumſtantial Journals of the *Methodiſts*, will find ſo exact a conformity in the frenzy of ſentiment, and even in the cant of expreſſion, upon the ſubjects of Faith, Grace, Redemption, Regeneration, Juſtification, &c. as may fully ſatisfy him, that they are both of the ſame Stock; and ready, on a return of the like

like kindly ſeaſon, to produce the ſame fruits. All the difference, which diſtance of times and variety of circumſtances have effected, is only this: The *Methodiſt* is now, an *Apoſtolic Independent*; and the Independent was then, a *Mahometan Methodiſt*.

Indeed, it hath been Mr. J. Weſley's miſhap, with every other requiſite of a ſkilful Leader, to fall upon times very unpropitious to the fortunes of a new Sect.

He found himſelf in a Government whoſe equity abhorred Perſecution for Religion; and whoſe firmneſs, on the other hand, would not ſuffer its principles of Toleration to be abuſed, to the diſturbance of Society. Here was little room for the exertion of that quality by which a Sectary may be properly ſaid to exiſt, namely, ZEAL active or paſſive. He wanted to be perſecuted; but Perſecution would not come at his call. Yet, it muſt be owned, he uſed every extraordinary method to provoke it: The time was now paſt, when it could be ſaid of this *Demon*, as of the leſs miſchievous ones of old, "Vocatus, aut non vocatus, audit." The advantages of *perſecution* to a new Sect, Mr. J. Weſley is not at all ſhy in confeſſing.—— "About one, I preached at Holton, where "likewiſe all is now calm, after a violent "ſtorm of ſeveral weeks, wherein many were "beaten and wounded, and outraged various "ways; *but* NONE MOVED *from their ſtedfaſtneſs.* In the evening I preached at Armley, "*to many who want a ſtorm, being quite* UNNERVED

" NERVED *by conſtant Sunſhine* (3)." It is the ſame conſcious want which makes him complain of ill treatment; and yet be diſſatisfied with good—" We came to St. Ives before " morning prayers, and walked to Church " without ſo much as one huzza. How " ſtrangely has one year changed the ſcene in " Cornwall! This is now a peaceable, nay " honourable ſtation. They give us good " words in almoſt every place. *What have* " *we done, that the World ſhould be ſo civil to* " *us* (4) *?*"

Is not this the language of a man whom nothing can pleaſe, when he is defeated in a ſecret purpoſe, which he is aſhamed to own? He languiſhed, we ſee, for good WHOLESOME SEVERITIES. Many (as he well expreſſes it) *wanted a ſtorm, being quite* UNNERVED *by conſtant Sunſhine.* To ſupply this want, which the Magiſtrate ſo cruelly denied, he is forced to make the beſt of thoſe mock perſecutions, the *Drums* and *Huzzas* of the Rabble. And ſo bloody always are his ideas, by a conſtant meditation on this ſubject, that, ſpeaking of the miſnomers of the Grand Jury of Cork, in their preſentment of his Brother, and half a ſcore more itinerant Preachers, as vagrants and perſons of ill fame, &c. he thus expreſſes himſelf ——" The names (only moſt of them *miſerably* " *mangled and murdered)* were deſigned for the

(3) Journ. from Nov. 25, 1746, to July 20, 1750. p. 88.

(4) Ibid. p. 31.

" names

" names of eight Preachers, &c. (5)" The future Martyrologiſt whom favouring Deſtiny has appointed to collect together the Saints and Martyrs of this afflicted Church, will, if he be wiſe, never ſuffer himſelf to be miſled into a belief that this *mangling and murdering* can refer to *names*; or indeed to any thing leſs than to an *Iriſh Maſſacre*, charitably diſguiſed by our meek Apoſtle, under a figure, not to ſay a deformity of Speech. To give theſe *Perſecutions* all the *relief* in his power, he expatiates on every adventure with ſuch circumſtance, that there is hardly a turnip-top thus ſacrilegiouſly employed, which has not had the honour of being recorded. But this is for Poſterity: Something more was to be done for the ſake of the *unnerved* Brethren. This ſmall pittance of *perſecution*, poor as it is, muſt be turned to uſe while time ſerved, leſt, like a flame of ſtraw, it ſhould go out as ſoon as it was put into a blaze. He therefore contrives to keep *perſecution* alive by *proſecuting his Perſecutors:* And, to make his revenge the ſweeter, he does it on the *toleration act*; the *Law* which does him ſo much miſchief, in depriving him of a real Perſecution. This he notably turns againſt itſelf, and makes an Inſtrument to ſupport and keep up a ſhadowy Perſecution, in the Shouts and Revels of the Mob.

Of this contrivance, and of the ſucceſs of this contrivance, he has given us many curious examples in his Journals. Abundantly ſufficient

(5) Journ. from July 20, 1749, to Oct. 30, 1751. p. 4.

to

to evince, that tho' he who perſecutes, breaks the Peace, yet as he is but the tool and Inſtrument of him who invites and provokes *perſecution*, the crime at length comes home to him who ſet the Rioter on work.

CHAP. X.

THE next mark of celeſtial Wiſdom is, its being GENTLE AND EASY TO BE INTREATED. That is, neither a rigid reprover of the different manners of others, nor obſtinately tenacious of its own: but, as far as Truth and Honeſty will permit, compliant and even obſequious to all men. The great Apoſtle of the Gentiles fully approves his pretenſions to this *Wiſdom*, in the account he gives of his conduct, *in becoming all things to all Men, that he might gain ſome* (6). For the truth of which, he appeals to thoſe who were beſt acquainted with his life and converſation. But amongſt our modern Apoſtles the Scene is ſhifted. We find them ſevere condemners of thoſe innocent manners of their fellow citizens, which they themſelves have abſtained from, on pretence of their being leſs profitable and edifying, or, perhaps, obſtructive of that perfection which they pretend to aim at. Nor are they leſs ſevere exactors of conformity to their own obſervances.

(6) 1 Cor. ix. 22.

They

They tell us what we are to think of them, in the very appellation they assume. For METHODISM (as we have said) implies a set of manners, marked out by the rule and compass; and, when made a name of distinction, it declares those manners are to be religiously and invariably observed, as the sacred badge of the Brotherhood. Hence Mr. J. Wesley in a letter *to the Church of God at Hernhuth in Upper Lusatia*, having reproved them for teaching, "that it "does imply *Liberty* to conform to the world, "by talking on useless, if not trifling subjects, "and by joining in worldly diversions, *in order* "*to do good*," They justify themselves by saying, "We believe it much better to discourse "out of the news-papers, than to chatter about "holy things to no purpose." To which he replies, "Perhaps so. But what is this "to the point? I believe both one and the "other to be useless, and therefore AN ABO-"MINATION TO THE LORD (7)." Nay, he pushed this matter so far, as to come to a solemn resolution, NEVER TO LAUGH: and, to guard himself against the approaches of this paltry infirmity, *never to speak a tittle of worldly things*. And certainly, he who carries his dissociability to this extreme, is in no danger of being EASILY INTREATED. He was now fit company only for the Devil; (with whom, as we have seen, he had a great deal to transact) indeed, not for him neither, till the more sociable Fiend had a little relaxed his muscles: For the first trick Satan played him, after they

(7) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 103.

grew

grew acquainted, was, as he himſelf tells us, to make him burſt out into an *immoderate fit of Laughter* (8). But he was ready *to tear himſelf to pieces* for his frailty.

Our Apoſtle's GENTLENESS may, by this time, be eaſily gueſs'd at. But he ſaves us the trouble. We learn it fully in his *encauſtic Paintings* of his Adverſaries. He met with one of theſe in a violent ſtorm at Sea. Yet the common danger of this dreadful hour, could not abate the more violent tempeſt in his mind—"For who ſhould be there (ſays he) but the "famous Mr. Gr—— of Carnarvonſhire. A "clumſy, overgrown, hardfaced man; whoſe "countenance I could only compare to that "(which I ſaw in Drury Lane, thirty years "ago) of one of the *Ruffians in Macbeth* (9) "——I walked over (ſays he) to Egham, "where Mr. —— preached one of the moſt "miſerable ſermons I ever heard: Stuff'd ſo "full of dull, ſenſeleſs, improbable lies of thoſe "he complimented with the title of falſe Pro-"phets (1)."—"At St. Ives we were ſaluted, "as uſual, with a Huzza, and a few ſtones *or* "pieces of dirt:" Yet, for want of a better, he has dignified even this with the name of a *Perſecution*. "The *Perſecution* here (ſays he) "was owing in great meaſure to the indefa-"tigable labours of Mr. *Hoblin* and Mr. *Sim-"mons*; Gentlemen worthy to be had in ever-

(8) See p. 90 of this Diſcourſe.

(9) Journ. from July 20, 1749, to Oct. 30, 1751. p. 31.

(1) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 88.

"laſt-

" lasting remembrance for their unwearied en-
" deavours to destroy Heresy.

" Fortunati ambo! Siquid mea pagina possit,
" Nulla dies unquam memori vos eximet
" ævo (2)."

Here he tells us, without disguise, that it is his holy purpose, to gibbet up the *Names* of these his two Persecutors, to everlasting Infamy: While, by the most unregenerate malice in the world, he dips his curses in the gall of irony; and, that they may strike the deeper, fletches them with a prophane classical Parody.

Yet this is the man who says,—" God forbid
" that I should RAIL, at a Turk, Infidel, or
" Heretic. I would point out their Errors,
" and I trust, in the SPIRIT OF MEEK-
" NESS (3)." Yea, *this* SPIRIT was so strong in him, that he blesses God for his goodness, in directing all temptations to fall on this *side*; which, tho' it may be called his *blind side*, (as he always winks at his injuries; sometimes, indeed, to take the better aim) he assures us, is not his *weak side*——" I cannot but stand
" amazed at the goodness of God. Others are
" most assaulted on the *weak side* of their Soul.
" But with me it is quite otherwise. If I
" have any strength at all, IT IS IN FORGIV-
" ING INJURIES. And on this very side am I

(2) Journ. from Oct. 17, 1743, to Nov. 17, 1746. p. 22.

(3) Journ. from Novemb. 1, 1730, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 112.

" assaulted

" assaulted more frequently than any other (4)." By which, with uncommon modesty, he would insinuate that tho' his *persecutions* abound, yet his *forgiveness*, *in the Spirit of meekness*, does much more abound.

St. Paul and St. James may be reconciled. But he is a bold man who will undertake to reconcile St. Paul and Mr. Wesley. The Reader, perhaps, will be better employed in turning his attention upon *ancient* and *modern* SAINTSHIP, at large: Where, in one general view, he will see *God's grace* in the First, and, in the Second, *Man's nature* severally asserting their Rights throughout the whole progress. The genial Spirit of God could breathe nothing but the balm of *gentleness and ease*. The pestilent heat of Fanaticism raises an inflammation and a tumour in the mind, whose Symptoms are an obdurate rigour, and impatience under the probe. The Heaven-struck Heart is affected like the purer metals, which easily soften, and run speedily at the touch of the etherial Ray. But the Fanatic Spirit, self-heated by its own fiery nature, retains the property of its congenial Earth, which grows harder and more intractable as it burns.

(4) Journ. from July 20, 1750, to Oct. 28, 1754. P. 39.

CHAP. XI.

TO proceed. St. James, in his account of celeſtial *Wiſdom*, advances from grace to grace. It is *peaceable:* This is its loweſt quality. It is *Gentle and eaſy to be intreated:* This is a further advance in its Character. The firſt only implies the not giving umbrage or offence to our Brother; but the ſecond declares a readineſs to conſult his pleaſure and convenience. The Apoſtle's next recommendation of this Wiſdom riſes ſtill higher: It is, he ſays, FULL OF MERCY AND GOOD FRUITS. It would have been a poor account of the *Wiſdom from above*, that it amounted only to an obſequious *eaſe* and *gentleneſs* of Manners: A diſpoſition of heart little more than the ſhadow or out line of Benevolence, that harmony of the affections, which the Chriſtian Faith calls CHARITY; and which the Apoſtle, by a beautiful periphraſis, terms, the being *full of mercy and good fruits.*

Let us enquire then into the MERCY and GOOD FRUITS of modern Saintſhip. The *mercy* of the Sufferer is *forgiveneſs*; The *mercy* of the Inflicter is *forbearance.*

Of Mr. Weſley's *forgiveneſs* under ſufferings, we have ſeen many examples in the Language he beſtows on his Oppoſers; who paſs with him under no other title than that of the *Devil's Servants* and the *Devil's Children:* Of his *forbearance*, when compleatly armed with the

Vengeance of Heaven, we have ſeen many more, in his diſpatching the Principal of theſe *Children of the Devil*, without mercy, to their *Father*. For one ſure mark of the hypocondriac ſpirit under a Fanatic ferment, is the readineſs to diſpenſe, and the raſhneſs to fling about, the exterminating Judgments of God: And when an Enthuſiaſt *calls down fire from Heaven*, the leaſt of his concern is, his being heard. So that every diſaſter, befalling his Oppoſers, is conſidered by him as God's *owning the Cauſe*, and he would eſteem it ingratitude to his Maſter to give it any other name than that of a JUDGMENT; juſt as *Witches*, when a miſchief happens to thoſe whom they have often curſed, aſcribe it to the Avenger of their quarrels, their truſty Coadjutor the Devil. For under the agitations of wrath and revenge, the *fruits of this Spirit* are much the ſame, whether Heaven or Hell be called to their aſſiſtance. Do I wrong theſe Men? See what has been ſaid above of this matter†: and if that does not ſuffice, turn again to Mr. J. Weſley's *Journals*. "Wedneſday 15. I went to Bedlam at the "repeated requeſt of Mr. S. who had been "confined there above two years. This was "the Perſon, who, while he was ſpeaking "againſt my Brother and me, to the Society "at Kingſwood, was in a *moment ſtruck raving* "*mad*. But, it ſeems, *God is at length intreated* "*for him*, and has reſtored him to a ſound "mind (1)." Again, "One J——n H——n "a weaver——zealous for the Church and

† P. 106—108.

(1) Journ. from Oct. 27, 1743, to Nov. 17, 1746. p. 33.

" againſt Diſſenters of every denomination—— " He laboured much to convince his acquain- " tance that the *ſtrange fits, into which people at* " *the Societies fell*, was a deluſion of the Devil. " We were going home when one met us in the " ſtreet, and informed us, That J——n H——n " was fallen *raving mad*.——Between one and " two, I came in and found him on the floor, " the room being full of people, whom his wife " would have kept out, but he cried aloud, " No, let the world ſee the *juſt Judgment of* " *God*. Two or three men were holding him " as well as they could. He immediately fixed " his eyes upon me, and ſtretching out his " hands, cried, Oh! this is he who, I ſaid, " was a deceiver of the People. But *God* " *has overtaken me* (2)."—And again,—" I was " informed of an *awful providence*. A poor " wretch who was here the laſt week, curſing, " blaſpheming, and labouring with all his might " to hinder the *word of God*, had afterwards " boaſted to many, that he would come again " on *Sunday*, and no man ſhould ſtop his mouth " then. But on Friday *God laid his hand* upon " him, and on Sunday he was buried (3).—I " ſaw a poor man, *(once joined with us)* who " wanted nothing in this world, but the peace " the world cannot give. A day or two before, " *he hanged himſelf*, but was cut down before " he was dead. He has been crying out ever " ſince, *God had left him, becauſe he had left the*

(2) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 44.

(3) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 59, 60.

" *Child-*

" *Children of God* (4)." But he is inexorable to all who apoſtatize.—" I buried the body of " Lucy Godſhall——after preſſing toward the " mark for more than two years——*She became* " *weary and faint*——*I put her out of the land*, " ——God bleſſed this to her ſoul."——But how ?——" She fell down on her knees, and " delivered up her ſoul and body into the hands " of God. In the inſtant the uſe of all her " limbs was taken away, and ſhe was in a " burning fever.—She cried out on *Satan*— " was in *darkneſs*—was in *light*—cloſed her eyes " and died (5)."——" I was preſſed to viſit " Nicholas Palmer, one who had *ſeparated* " *from us*, and behaved with a great *bitterneſs*, " till *God laid his hand* upon him. He had " ſent for me ſeveral times, ſaying he could " not die in peace till he had ſeen me.——We " wreſtled with God in his behalf——his ſoul " was comforted; and a few hours after quietly " fell aſleep (6)."

Their GOOD FRUITS come next to be conſidered. Mr. J. Weſley's idea of *true Religion* doth not promiſe much. He ſaith, " It doth " not conſiſt in any or all theſe three things, " *the living harmleſs—uſing the means of Grace* " *—and doing much good.* A man, he ſays, " may do all this, and yet have *no true Reli-* " *gion at all* (7)."

(4) Journ. from Oct. 27, 1743, to Nov. 17, 1746. p. 91.

(5) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 71. (6) Journ. ibid. p. 5.

(7) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741, p. 11, 12.

Yet St. JAMES talks another language. *Pure Religion* (and, I suppose, *pure* and *true* differ only in sound) *and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the World* (8).

Now, what is *visiting the fatherless and widows*, but *the doing much good?* And what is *keeping one's self unspotted from the world*, but *using the means of Grace?* In what a fearful taking then, must Mr. Wesley's Zealots be, who, misled by the Bible, have so long mistaken *true Religion?* The least it will do is to drive them to *despair*. But this is the very state in which their Master delights to take them up. And his assurance, that *true Religion* consists *in God's dwelling and reigning in the Soul* (9), soon makes way for a happier madness: The Jaws of Hell begin to close, the Gates of Heaven to open.—But, what the over-laboured imagination suffered, during the course of this operation, requires the hand of a Master to describe. I shall give it therefore in Mr. J. Wesley's own words: and as these his spiritual cures, (which he reports with the exactness of an Hippocrates or a Sidenham) are all the GOOD FRUITS he pretends to, he will not be displeased to have a few of the choicest of them set in a fair light.

The condition of his Audience, on his first operation upon them, is thus graphically described—" I preached in an open place, two or

(8) St. James, c. i. ver. 27.
(9) P. 11. ut sup.

" three

" three miles from Newcaſtle. The wind was " high and extremely ſharp: but I ſaw none go " away till I went. Yet I obſerved none ſeemed " to be much convinced: only STUNN'D, AS " IF CUT IN THE HEAD (1)." This was in order. They were firſt to be *ſtunned*; the Watchman, Reaſon, was to be laid aſleep before he could ſet fire to their Imaginations. But he brings them to their ſenſes with a vengeance, the vengeance of the Devil. " I felt the FIRE " OF HELL already kindled in my breaſt, " (ſays one) and all my body was in as much " pain as if I had been in a burning fiery fur- " nace (2)."—" I was interrupted (ſays he) by " the cries of one who was *pricked at the heart.*" One of thoſe, I ſuppoſe, who had before been *cut in the head:* And having now got poſſeſſion both of the *head* and *heart*, the game begins. ——" Another perſon drop'd down——a little " boy near him was ſeized in the ſame man- " ner. A young man who ſtood behind, fixed " his eyes on him, and ſunk down himſelf as " one dead. But ſoon began to roar out and " beat himſelf on the ground, ſo that ſix men " could ſcarcely hold him.—Mean while many " others began to cry out to the Saviour of all, " that he would come and help them, inſo- " much that all the houſe, and indeed all the " ſtreet for ſome ſpace, was in an uproar.—I " was called after ſupper to one who feeling in " herſelf ſuch a Conviction as ſhe had never " known before, had run out of the Society

(1) Journ. from Sept 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 82.

(2) Ibid. p. 83.

" in all haſte, *that ſhe might not expoſe herſelf.* " But the hand of God followed her ſtill, " &c. (3)". This fear of *expoſing herſelf*, Mr. J. Weſley, we ſee, takes much amiſs. He ſpeaks with ſome reſentment, but more contempt, of her delicacy. Yet it ſeems hard that he would not ſuffer the young Woman to underſtand the nature of *her own feelings*, and conſequently to be the beſt judge of the danger ſhe was in, of *expoſing herſelf*.—" Forty or Fifty " of thoſe who were ſeeking ſalvation, deſired " leave to ſpend the night together in the ſo- " ciety room. Before ten, I left them, and laid " down."—For our Engineer had ſo amply provided them with combuſtibles, and ſo fitly laid his train, that he knew they would take fire from their own colliſions. He was not diſappointed.—" Between two and three in the " morning he was awaked, and deſired to " come down ſtairs. I immediately (ſays he) " heard ſuch a confuſed noiſe, as if a number " of men were all putting to the Sword. It " increaſed, when I came into the room, and " began to pray, &c. (4)"—" Thence I went " to a poor woman who had been long in *de-* " *ſpair*. I was glad to meet with Mrs. R. there; " the perſon mentioned in Mr. Whitefield's " Journal, who after *three* years *madneſs* (ſo " CALLED) was ſo deeply convinced of Sin, " &c. (5)"—" Another of Dr. Monro's pa-

(3) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 50, 51.

(4) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 51, 52.

(5) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p 8.

" tients

" tients came to desire my advice; I found no " reason to believe she had been otherwise *mad* " than every one is who is deeply convinced of " Sin (6)."—" A middle-aged woman desired " me to return thanks for her to God; who, " as many witnesses then present testified, was, " a day or two before, really *distracted*, and, " as such, *tied down in her bed*. But upon " prayer made for her, she was instantly relieved " and restored to a sound mind (7)."—" *I could* " *not but be under some concern* with regard to " one or two persons, who were tormented in " an unaccountable manner, and seemed to " be indeed *Lunatics*, as well as sore vexed (8)." Here, for the first time, Humanity seems to have recovered a little of its rights, amidst these scenes of horrour. Mr. J. WESLEY himself confesses, *he could not but be under some concern*. But invigorated by the *new Man*, he soon shakes off the *human pity* of the *old*, and makes a joke even of the very *Lunacy*, he had pretended to lament. " Two or three who were at the Devanden " (a high hill two or three miles from Chepstow) " *are gone quite distracted*, i. e. they mourn and " refuse to be comforted till they have Redemp- " tion, &c. (9)"—" I desired one who had " seen affliction herself to go and visit Mrs. " G—— in *Bedlam* (put there by her husband " as a *mad woman)* where it pleased God greatly " to knit their hearts together, and with his " comforts to refresh their souls (1)."——

(6) Ibid. p. 83. (7) Ibid. p. 4.
(8) Ibid. p. 88. (9) Ibid. p. 90.
(1) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 54.

" Amongſt the hearers was one, who ſometime " before had been deeply convinced of her un- " godlineſs, inſomuch that ſhe cried out day " and night, *Lord ſave or I periſh.* All the " neighbours agreeing that ſhe was *ſtark mad*, " her huſband put her into a Phyſician's hands, " who blooded her largely, and laid on ſeveral " bliſters. But all this proving without ſuc- " ceſs, ſhe was in a ſhort time judged to be *in-* " *curable.* When Mrs. Johnſon came, ſhe " ſoon ſaw the nature of the diſeaſe, having " herſelf *gone thro'* the ſame. She ordered all " the medicines to be thrown away, and ex- " horted the Patient to *look unto Jeſus* (2)."

And with this ſpiritual *madneſs* he is ſo enamoured, that he calls it, when at its height, A GLORIOUS TIME. " I preached at Weaver's " Hall. IT WAS A GLORIOUS TIME. Several " drop'd to the ground, as if ſtruck with ligh- " tening, &c. &c. (3)" And where this is wanting, tho' every other thing be to his wiſh, he is ſo diſſatisfied, that it is as much as ever his ſubmiſſion to the divine Will can obtain of him, *to let God do as ſeemeth him good.*—" I ſaw " none of that *triumph of Faith*, which has " been ſo COMMON in other places. But the " Believers go on *calm and ſteady.*—LET GOD " DO AS SEEMETH HIM GOOD (4)."

But though Mr. J. Weſley does ſo ably, in this new Trade of *turning fools into mad-men*,

(2) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 53.
(3) Journ. ibid. p. 27. (4) Journ. ibid. p. 78.

yet

yet his Craft's-maſter is certainly one Mr. Wh—y, of whom Mr. Weſley tells this extraordinary tale. "A poor woman gave an account of what I think ought never to be "forgotten." Truly, I think ſo too—"It was "four years, ſhe ſaid, ſince her Son, Peter "Shaw, then nineteen or twenty years old, "by hearing a Sermon of Mr. Wh—y, fell "into great uneaſineſs. She thought he was "ill, and would have ſent for a Phyſician. But "he ſaid, No, no, ſend for Mr. Wh—y. "He was ſent for, and came; and, after aſking "a few queſtions, told her, *The Boy is mad*, get "a Coach and carry him to Dr. M——, *uſe "my name, I have ſent ſeveral ſuch to him* (5)." ——Who this Mr. Wh—y is, or what he is, I know not. But, we ſee, he ſends his People to Monro, with the ſame unconcern in ſearch of loſt brains, that one would enquire of Sir J. Fielding for a loſt portmanteau.

Such are the exploits which Mr. J. Weſley calls, in the place laſt quoted, BLESSINGS FROM GOD: and which therefore we may well call the GOOD FRUITS of his Miniſtry; thoſe by which St. James directs us to judge of his *Miſſion*. For what the Apoſtle calls *good fruits*, namely, *doing much good*, Mr. J. Weſley plainly tells us belong not to *true Religion*: What belongs not to true Religion he rightly deems ſuperfluous: And whatever is ſuperfluous he makes ſolemn reſolutions to avoid (6).

(5) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1759, to Sept. 3, 1741, p. 56.
(6) Journ. from Feb. 1, 1737-8, to his return from Germany, p. 13.

CHAP. XII.

HITHERTO the Marks delivered by St. James, to judge of a pretended Miſſionary from Heaven, conſider him as urging his pretenſions fairly and with good faith; tho' poſſibly in a fanatic or enthuſiaſtic way: But what follows,—WITHOUT PARTIALITY AND WITHOUT HYPOCRISY,—repreſents the pretender to ſuch a character as capable of acting in a maſk, and uſing the mere worldly arts, of fraud and deceit. And this ſuppoſition is made with admirable judgment and knowlege of human Nature.

ENTHUSIASM, ſo indiſpenſable a requiſite in the ſucceſsful leading of a Sect, muſt always be accompanied with craft and knavery. There is a neceſſity for this odd combination; and the thing itſelf, as ſtrange as it may ſeem, is very naturally to be accounted for.

A meer cool-headed Projector, without any tincture of innate enthuſiaſm, can never ſucceed in his Deſigns, becauſe ſuch a one can never exhibit thoſe ſurprizing freaks, which a heated imagination, working on a *diſordered*, tho', for this purpoſe, *fitly framed* temper of body, ſo ſpeciouſly produces. For the ſpirits of the People, who are to be taken in, can never be allured but by raiſing their *admiration*, and keeping up their confidence in an inſpired Leader. Beſides, new doctrines and new ideas are never ſo readily received as when the Teacher of them is in earneſt,

earneſt, and believes *Himſelf:* For then there is ſomething ſo natural in his conduct as eaſily to conciliate belief; there is ſomething ſo alluring that it acts even like an Incantation.

On the other hand, a *mere Enthuſiaſt*, who, by virtue of this faculty, hath gone ſo far in his purpoſe as to raiſe the admiration, and to captivate the ſpirits, of the People, muſt here begin to fail, if he be without the other quality, *ſectarian Craft:* For his *fanaticiſm* not being under the controul of his *judgment*, he will want the proper dexterity to apply the different views, tempers, and purſuits of the People, now enflamed and ready to become his Inſtruments, to the advancement of his Projects.

But when theſe two talents of *Fraud* and *Fanaticiſm* unite to furniſh out the Leader of a Sect, great will be the ſucceſs of his undertakings. And when ſuch a one feels the ſtrength of this union, it is no wonder he ſhould be ready to cry out with Mr. J. Weſley, *Give me wherein to ſtand, and I will ſhake the whole earth* (1). For now the ſallies of his Enthuſiaſm will be ſo corrected by his Cunning, as to ſtrengthen and confirm his ſupernatural pretences; and the cold and ſlow advances of a too cautious policy will be warmed and puſhed forward by the force of his *Fanaticiſm*. *His craft* will enable him to elude the enquiries and objections of the more Rational; and his Viſions will irrecoverably ſubdue all the warmer Noddles. In a word, they will mutually ſupport

(1) See p. 96 of this Diſcourſe.

and

and ſtrengthen each other's force, and cover and repair each other's defects. St. Jerom ſeems to have had a true idea of this extraordinary combination, when he ſaid, "Nullus poteſt "Hæreſin ſtruere, niſi qui ARDENTIS INGE-"NII eſt, et habet DONA NATURAE (2)." Which may be thus paraphraſed,—*No Heretic will ever be able to raiſe a Sect, but he, in whoſe conſtitution, Nature has enabled Fraud and Fanaticiſm to act in concert.*

Several things concur to facilitate this happy conjunction. An Enthuſiaſt conſiders himſelf as an Inſtrument employed by Providence to attain ſome great End, for the ſake of which he was ſent out. This makes him diligent in his work; impatient under any let or obſtruction; and attentive to every method for removing it. Perſuaded of the neceſſity of the End, and of the divine Commiſſion intruſted to the Inſtrument, he begins to fancy that ſuch a one, for the obtaining ſo great a purpoſe, is diſpenſed with, in breaking, nay is authorized to break, the common Laws of Morality: which, in the cant of thoſe times, when Fanaticiſm had its full play, was called the BEING ABOVE ORDINANCES. In the firſt application of theſe *means*, the People are the Dupes of their Leader: But the ſucceſs being frequently far beyond even his own conception, he becomes, in his turn, the Dupe of himſelf; and begins in good earneſt to believe that the trick which he play'd them, was indeed not of his own contrivance,

(2) See Div. Legat. B. iii. Sect. 6.

but

but the inſpired inſtigation of Heaven (3). This will explain an obſcure paſſage of Tacitus, where ſpeaking of this ſort of Character, in his oracular way, he ſays, FINGUNT SIMUL CREDUNTQUE. Let me add, that this ſeems to have been much the caſe of OLIVER CROMWELL from his firſt mounting into the Saddle and the Pulpit, to his laſt reveries on his death-bed (4).

Again, *Enthuſiaſm* is a kind of ebullition or critical ferment of the mind, which a vigorous nature ſometimes works thro', and by ſlow degrees, is able to ſurmount. Hence the moſt ſucceſsful Impoſtors, who have ſet out in all the blaze of Fanaticiſm, have compleated their Schemes amidſt the cool depths and ſtillneſs of Politics. Tho' this, in ſome degree, be common to them all, yet I know of none who exemplifies the caſe ſo fully as the famous IGNATIUS LOIOLA. This wonderful Perſon began his *extaſies* in the mire, and finiſhed his courſe

(3) That great obſerver of Nature, CERVANTES, having made Sancho (to ſave himſelf from the vexation of a ſleeveleſs errand) palm upon his Maſter a ſuppoſititious Dulcinea; When the Squire comes to relate this adventure to the Dutcheſs, ſhe extolls his ingenuity ſo highly, that he begins to ſuſpect himſelf to be tricked into his own contrivance; and that the Inchanters had preſented him with a *true* Dulcinea in maſquerade, when he thought he was impoſing a *falſe one* barefaced on his Maſter.

(4) Thurloe tells us, that the Protector, on his death-bed, foretold his recovery, as an inſpiration from Heaven. Had it proved true, he had gained much by obtaining to himſelf the uſeful Character of Prophet: and he loſt nothing by the conviction of its falſehood.

in

in the direction and execution of Councils, which even in his own life-time, were ready to give Law to Chriſtendom. Mr. J. Weſley appears to have ſtudied this great Maſter well: tho', by a common practice of thoſe who ſet up for themſelves, he kicks away the ſteps by which he mounted. "I rode (ſays he) to Oxford "——in riding I read over that ſurpriſing "book, the life of IGNATIUS LOIOLA. Surely "one of the greateſt men that ever was en- "gaged in the ſupport of a *bad cauſe*. *I won- "der any man ſhould judge him to be an Enthuſiaſt.* "No: but he knew the people with whom he "had to do. And ſetting out like Count Z. "with a FULL PERSUASION *that he might* USE "GUILE TO PROMOTE THE GLORY OF "GOD (4)." Now I deſire to know, how any, but an ENTHUSIAST, could have a *full perſuaſion*, i. e. be perſuaded, bona fide, *that he might uſe guile to promote the glory of God?* Or how any, but a KNAVE, could ſucceed in this *perſuaſion?*—Cicero obſerves that the *Eye*, which ſees all other things, ſees not it ſelf: This inſtance will ſhew it to be equally true, that the *Mind*, which plays ſuch ſtrange tricks, is often very inattentive to its own frame and operations.

Modern Saintſhip then being ſo ſubject to theſe odd traverſes, it is well for BOTH SOCIETIES, that we have an unerring Rule whereon to eſtimate its Claim. For the Apoſtle having declared that *the wiſdom from above is without* PAR-

(4) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p 67.

TIALITY

TIALITY *and without* HYPOCRISY, if such qualities be found in those who pretend to derive all, immediately, from *above*, we need no further evidence of the imposture. And, now, having hitherto used this famed Head of his Sect for an Example, it would be unkind to drop him here, and not suffer him to finish, as he began, his Apostolical career.

PARTIALITY consists in dispensing an *unequal measure*, in our transactions with Others:

And HYPOCRISY in attempting to cover that *unequal measure* by prevarication and false colours.

The Reader must have been very inattentive to what hath been produced from Mr. J. Wesley's JOURNALS, not to have observed the many convincing marks of the writer's *partiality* and *hypocrisy*. The passages have indeed been given to convict him of other *fanatic* qualities, equally inconsistent with the *wisdom which is from above*; but many of them will, at the same time, serve to shew how ably he availed himself of these two political Accomplishments.

We have seen in general, that his Followers are always the *Children of God*; and his Opposers, the *Children of the Devil*. But the first being directed by inward feelings and the impulse of an inflamed fancy, and the other by the outward testimony of Scripture, interpreted by human reason, it is no great wonder that Mr. J. Wesley, who saw them so much unlike, should marshal them under two different Leaders.

But

But what shall we think, when we find him saying the worst of his Friends that his Enemies have said of him, as soon as ever he sees them presume to play over his own pranks in any other Name? If they follow not him, they are *Fanatics* and *Enthusiasts*, how like soever they be in all other things to their ghostly Pattern?— "I was with two persons (says Mr. J. Wesley) "who, I doubt, are properly *Enthusiasts*. For "first they think to attain the end without the "means, which is *enthusiasm*, properly so "called: again they think themselves inspired "by God, *and are not*. But false imaginary "inspiration is *enthusiasm*. That theirs is only "imaginary inspiration appears hence, it contra-"dicts *the Law and the Testimony* (5)." These are wise words: but what do they amount to? Only to this, That these two Persons would not take out their Patents of Inspiration from his Office; and, therefore, he has advertised them, for Counterfeits. However, thus much we gain by them, that all modern pretences to Inspiration are, by the acknowlegement of Mr. J. Wesley himself, to be tryed by the *Law and the Testimony*. He cannot, then, surely refuse to have his own pretensions tried before that Judicature to which we have appealed him.

Miss Gr——, one of the holy, had told another Miss, that Mr. J. Wesley was a *Papist*, perhaps on account of the honour he does to *auricular confession*, one kind of which he recommends to his BANDS. Upon this, Miss Gr——

(5) Journ. from Aug 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 23.

is

is anathematized. And we are told, that, in conſequence, "ſhe had lately been *raving mad*; "that as ſuch, ſhe was tied down in her "bed (6)." Yet all theſe circumſtances of *madneſs* have, in the opinion of the ableſt Phyſicians, befallen Mr. J. Weſley's favourite Saints; whom he has vindicated from that Opprobrium; he has laughed at the ignorance of the faculty; and declared thoſe equivocal marks to be the conſtant Symptoms of the NEW BIRTH.

He pronounces Sentence of *Enthuſiaſm* upon another: And tells us, Wherefore, without any diſguiſe.—"Here (ſays he) I *took leave* of "a poor, mad, *original Enthuſiaſt*, who had "been ſcattering abroad LIES in every quar-"ter (7)." By which we find, that, even in Mr. J. Weſley's own opinion, *Fanaticiſm* and *Knavery* are very near neighbours.

"I had much converſation with Mr. Simp-"ſon an *original Enthuſiaſt*.---I deſired him in "the evening to give an exhortation---He did "ſo, and ſpoke *many good things*, *in a manner* "*peculiar to himſelf*. When he had done, I "ſumm'd up what he had ſaid, methodizing "and explaining it. O what pity is it that "this well-meaning man ſhould ever ſpeak "without an Interpreter! (8)"---and that Mr. J. Weſley ſhould not be he!

(6) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 73-4.
(7) Journ. from Oct. 27, 1743, to Nov. 17, 1746. p. 71.
(8) Journ. ibid p. 91.

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In these two last passages, we are presented with two ORIGINAL ENTHUSIASTS. But how differently do we find them treated! The first is accused of doing the work of the Devil, of spreading *lies* of his Master; on which account his Master *takes his leave of him:* a gentle expression, to signify, the thrusting him out, head and shoulders, from the Society of Saints: The other likewise, whose *original enthusiasm* is made to consist only in want of *Method*, or, to speak more properly, want of *Methodism*, is only lamented, as having the ill luck to *speak without an Interpreter*. That is, without having his doctrine regulated on the dictates of his Master. But the First sat his Master at defiance: the Second *spoke many good things*, that is, he professed a doctrine agreeable to Mr. Wesley; indeed, *in a manner peculiar to himself*, that is, not on Mr. Wesley's Authority, but his own. Now, there were some hopes of Him; but none at all of the other. Therefore tho' they are pronounced ORIGINAL ENTHUSIASTS alike, yet we must distinguish, and rate their Titles very differently. The first *Original* was of his original the Devil, *a scatterer abroad of lies in every quarter:* The second was worth recovering. His *Original Enthusiasm* was a foundation, like *Original Sin*, to erect upon it a monument of Grace.

But the most *genuine instance of enthusiasm*, which, he tells us, he will give, and which, without doubt, he does give, with the utmost reluctance, is the following. He preached at *Tanfield-Leigh*.---"But so dead, *senseless*, unaf-"fected a congregation (says he) have I scarce "seen,

" ſeen, except at *Wickham*. Whether Goſpel " or Law, or Engliſh or Greek, ſeemed all " one to them." Yet he *ſpoke*, he tells us, *ſtrong rough words*. But why is *want of ſenſe* put into this *rough* deſcription of their unregenerate State? He owns, that numbers of the Godly were without any. And why would he elicite *ſenſe* from theſe Gentiles, when, upon their converſion, they were finally to be deprived of it, in *extacies* and *new births*. However, as ungrateful as the Soil appeared,---" Yet the ſeed " ſown even there was not quite loſt. For on " Thurſday morning, between four and five, " *John Brown*, then of *Tanfield-Leigh*, was " *waked out of ſleep* by the voice that raiſeth the " dead; and ever ſince he has been full of love " and peace and joy in the Holy Ghoſt." But now ſee what comes of *waking theſe ſleepers*. This ſame J— B—— who had received the Holy Ghoſt but at the latter end of November, became ſo *freakiſh* by the beginning of December, that he even forced Mr. J. Weſley (for the honour of Methodiſm itſelf) to pronounce *him* likewiſe a *genuine Enthuſiaſt*, and to throw aſide this precious Saint, as flawed by over-bakeing, amongſt the uſeleſs rubbiſh of his Shop.

" I was both ſurpriſed and grieved"---Here, Reader, thou mayeſt ſafely believe him---" at " a *genuine* inſtance of *Enthuſiaſm*. J— B—— " of Tanfield-Leigh, who had received a SENSE " of the love of God a few days before, came " riding thro' the town, *hollowing* and *ſhouting*" [the inſeparable ſymptoms of the *new birth*] " and driving all the People before him, telling " them,

" them, *God had told him he ſhould be a* KING, " *and ſhould tread all his enemies under his* " *feet* (9)."

Now this being the only FRUIT of the *ſeed ſown* in this place, had it not been better to have let theſe honeſt people alone? who appear amiable, even thro' the ſarcaſtic abuſe he ſo liberally pours over them.---" At Wickham, I " ſpoke ſtrong rough words: but I did not per- " ceive that any regarded what was ſpoken. " The People indeed were exceeding quiet, " and *the cold kept them from falling aſleep*; till, " before two, I left them very *well ſatisfied with* " *the Preacher and with themſelves* (1)." And why ſhould they not! Why is this poor ſatiſfaction, in themſelves, which they had ſo liberally expreſſed towards him, begrudged them? A reaſonable Man deſires no more, than that his friends be ſatisfied with him; he does not expect, nay, he would be ſorry, to find them diſſatisfied with themſelves. But ſuch an equality of mind and meaſure, as in the good people of Wickham, is deſtructive of all the ſchemes of a Fanatic Leader: Who muſt find, or *make*, a People deſperate, and ready to hang themſelves, before they can be prepared and rightly tempered for the ſacred Mold of Methodiſm.

We ſhall end, where every Fanatic Leader ends,---with his HYPOCRISY. And if *evaſion* and *prevarication*, in the moſt eſſential points of

(9) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 79

(1) Ibid. p. 78.

his

his Miniſtry, may be called by that name, I cannot ſee how Mr. J. Weſley will eſcape from having this concluding mark of impoſture fixed upon him.

I. We have wearied ourſelves and Readers, in recounting the numberleſs MIRACLES by which He and his affairs have been ſupported, amidſt a *cloud of Witneſſes* well diſpoſed to magnify the ſcene. Yet, after all this, with a WORLDLY PRUDENCE which one would not expect in a man who calls it *the myſtery of Iniquity*, he thinks fit to ſecure himſelf a retreat, in caſe all theſe wonders ſhould become problematical. For after having heaped them upon one another, Olympus-high, throughout nine copious Journals, he ſneaks away under the cover of a puny Wonder, and leaves the defence of all his Giant-miracles in the lurch! "About five (ſays he) I began, near the Keelman's Hoſpital, many thouſands ſtanding round, or ſitting on the Graſs. The wind was high juſt before; but ſcarce a breath was felt, all the time we aſſembled before God. I praiſe God for this alſo. Is IT ENTHUSIASM TO SEE GOD IN EVERY BENEFIT *which we receive* (2)?" Certainly it is not. The *Enthuſiaſm* conſiſts in believing thoſe *benefits* to be *miraculouſly* conferred by a change in the eſtabliſhed order of Nature. This is the *Enthuſiaſm* with which he is charged; and this Charge, almoſt every page of his Journals will ſupport. But here, by the neateſt

(2) Journ. from July 20, 1750, to Oct. 28, 1754. p. 18.

addreſs,

addreſs, he covertly inſinuates, (as a Word to the Wiſe) that he meant no more by his *Miracles*, than the *ſeeing of God in every benefit we receive*. A certain Philoſopher (2) of great name fancied he had explained the nature of viſion well, on the principle of *ſeeing all things in God*. And if the World be content to be paid in ſuch coin, our Divine will not be long in its debt. He can explain *Miracles*, as well as the other explained *Nature*, by the knack he has of *ſeeing God in all things*. This then goes a great way towards ridding his hands of Miracles when the Inquiſitive become troubleſome. But as he well knew it might be ſaid of him, "If you part with your Miracles, you ſtrip yourſelf of the credentials of your Miſſion," he has a fetch for this alſo; a Friend to help him at a dead lift; whoſe opinion, "he wiſhes all calm and im-" partial men would conſider—Not to eſtabliſh " the power of *working Miracles* as the great " Criterion of a divine Miſſion; when Scrip-" ture *teaches us that the agreement of doctrines* " *with truth as taught in thoſe Scriptures*, is the " only infallible Rule (3)." Suppoſe now any ſenſe could be drawn out of this gallimatias of *Scripture's teaching that the agreement of doctrines with truth as taught in thoſe Scriptures, is the only infallible rule:* And that it might mean, "that Scripture teaches us, that the conformity of its doctrines with the truths diſcoverable by natural light, is the only Criterion." I then aſk, Where SCRIPTURE teacheth this? I aſk it, I

(2) Malebranche.

(3) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 72.

ſay, Becauſe REASON teacheth another thing: for, from the Premiſſes, of the *conformity of Scripture doctrines with truth*, Her Concluſion is only this, That Scripture doctrines are true; not that they were immediately derived from Heaven. I am *afraid* therefore, that *Scripture* is here much ſcandalized, by making it talk a language ſo diſſonant to *Reaſon*. And I am the more confirmed in this opinion, ſince Scripture, from the mouth of Jeſus himſelf, expreſly ſays, that the *power of working miracles*, and not *the conformity of Scripture doctrines to truth*, is the great *criterion of a divine Miſſion*. The words of Jeſus are theſe: "If I had not done amongſt "them the works which no other man did, they "had not had Sin: But now have they both ſeen "and hated me and my Father (4)." But why, in caſe *no miracles had been worked* amongſt them, *had they not had Sin?* For this reaſon, and only for this, that, without *Miracles*, there was *no ſufficient criterion* of a DIVINE MISSION. And *Sin* could not be imputed to them for rejecting a Character which did not bring its full credentials with it. From what I can ſee then, Mr. J. Weſley muſt either ſtick to his *Miracles*, or give up his *Miſſion*.

II. But he ſhifts and doubles no leſs with regard to the *Extacies*, and the *New-birth* of his Saints. Sometimes they are undoubtedly of *God*; ſometimes again as certainly of the *Devil*: but he is conſtant in this, that *Natural cauſes* have no hand in them. The reaſon is plain: He could make both GOD and the DEVIL conducive to his purpoſes; but NATURE is the

(4) John ch. xv. ver 24.

ſure

ſure deſtruction of every fanatic frolic.—The Saints met in Fetter-lane to humble themſelves before God for *grieving the Holy Spirit.*—To the ſeveral offences aſſigned, Mr. J. Weſley adds—"But above all, by BLASPHEMING HIS "WORKS amongſt us, imputing it either to "NATURE, to the force of imagination and "animal Spirits, or even the *deluſion of the* "DEVIL.—At that hour we found GOD with "us as at the firſt. *Some fell proſtrate upon the* "*ground. Others burſt out, as with one conſent,* "*into a loud praiſe and thankſgiving.* And many "openly teſtified, There had been *no ſuch day* "*as this*, ſince January the firſt, preceding (5)."—"On Friday many were deeply convinced; "but none were delivered from that painful "conviction. The Children came to the *birth*; "but there was not ſtrength to bring forth. "*I fear we have grieved the Spirit of the jealous* "*God by queſtioning his work* (6)."

—"Innumerable cautions were given me not "to regard *Viſions* or *Dreams*, or to fancy peo-"ple had remiſſion of Sins, becauſe of their "*Cries*, or tears, or outward profeſſions.—The "Sum of my anſwer was as follows: You "deny that God does now work theſe effects: "at leaſt that he works them in this manner. "I AFFIRM BOTH: Becauſe I have heard "theſe things with my own ears, and ſeen "them with my own eyes. I have ſeen very "many perſons changed in a moment from the "Spirit of fear, horror, deſpair, to the Spirit of "love, joy, and peace.—What I have to ſay

(5) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 59. (6) Journ. ibid. p. 16.

"touch-

" touching *Visions* or *Dreams* is this: I know " several persons in whom this great change " was wrought in a *dream*, or during a *strong* " *representation to the eye of the mind*, of Christ, " either on the Cross or in Glory. This is the " fact (7)."——Nay, he is so convinced of its being the *work* of God, that the horrid *blasphemies* which ensued, he ascribes to the abundance of joy, which God had given to a poor mad woman of his flock. " I met with one, " who having been lifted up with the abun- " dance of joy which God had given her, had " fallen into blasphemies and vain imaginations " *as are not common to men.* In the afternoon " I found another instance, nearly, I fear, of " the same kind——She had her *private revel-* " *lations* so called, &c. (8)" But now, on a sudden, he gives us the reverse of the Medal, and directly revokes all he had advanced.—" I " told them they were not to judge of the Spirit " whereby any one spoke, either by *appearances* " or by *common report*, or by their own *inward* " *feelings.* No, nor by any *Dreams*, *Visions*, " or Revelations supposed to be made to their " soul, any more than by their tears, or any " *involuntary effects wrought upon their bodies.* I " warned them, all these were in themselves of a " DOUBTFUL DISPUTABLE NATURE. They " *might* be from GOD, or they *might* not (9)." The Reader cannot but be much surprized to

(7) Journ. ibid. p. 49.

(8) Journ. from Novemb. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p 54.

(9) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p 60, 61.

find so formal a recantation of what he had said (1) just above concerning *inward feelings*, *dreams*, *visions* and *extacies*; and of his own *confidence* in affirming these to be the work of God, from his *having both heard these things with his own ears, and from his having seen them with his own eyes*; for here he denies *common report*, (and are not other people's *ears* and *eyes* as good as his?) or *appearances* or, even *feelings*, to be a sufficient ground of assurance: Of this, I can give no better account, and perhaps the Reader will desire no better, than this, that when our Apostle thought fit thus to unsay, what he had so confidently affirmed before, it was in a desponding hour, when he *was in much doubt whether God would not lay him aside and send other Labourers into his harvest* (2). Under these fears he seemed resolved, at least, that these new *Labourers* should not reap what he had sown; and therefore, at all adventures, thought proper to cut the ground from under their feet.

At length, finding his Cause sufficiently disgraced by the unruliness of these *divine Agitations*; and knowing (as we shall see presently) how to make a better use of them, he fairly gives them all to the DEVIL. "I enquired "(says he) into the case of those who had "almost every night the last week, *cried out* "*aloud*, during the preaching. I found that "all of them were persons in perfect health, "and had not been subject to Fits of any kind "till they were thus affected: That this had

(1) See p. 170. (2) Journ. ibid p. 60.

"come

" come upon every one of them in a moment, " without any previous notice, while they were " either hearing the word of God, or thinking " on what they had heard : That in that mo- " ment they dropt down, loſt all their ſtrength, " and were ſeized with violent pain. This " they expreſſed in different manners. Some " ſaid they felt juſt as if a ſword was running " thro' them : others, that they thought, a great " weight lay upon them, as if it would ſqueeſe " them into the Earth. Some ſaid they were " quite choak'd ſo that they could not breathe ; " others, that their hearts ſwelled ready to burſt: " and others, that it was as if their Heart, as " if all their Inſide, as if their whole Body " was tearing all to pieces. Theſe *Symptoms* I " can no more impute to any NATURAL CAUSE " than to the SPIRIT OF GOD. I can make " no doubt but it was SATAN TEARING THEM " as they were coming to Chriſt. And hence " proceeded thoſe *grievous cries* whereby he " might deſign both to DISCREDIT the Work " of God, and to affright fearful People from " hearing that Word, whereby their ſouls might " be ſaved (3)."

Now, the Reader ought to take notice, that theſe were the very *Symptoms* which Mr. J. Weſley had before aſcribed to the *ſpirit of God.* ——But, by this time he was ſenſible, and ſo he confeſſes, in this very place, that they had DISCREDITED the *Work.* They were therefore to be ſent to the DEVIL, from whence they

(3) Journ. from Sept. 3, 1741, to Oct. 27, 1743. p. 91.

came; yet ſtill upon Mr. J. Weſley's Errand. For there is nothing, except NATURE, as we obſerved above, which he can not put to ſome good uſe or other. And this new Donation of the *extacies of the Saints* was a noble foundation for what he was now projecting, the Farce of DIABOLISMS and EXORCISMS. Well, therefore, might he exult over this Old Miſchief-maker, *as not having wit enough to diſcern* that he was over-matched; and that Mr. John Weſley was too hard for him. *I wonder* (ſays he) *the Devil has not wiſdom enough to diſcern that he is deſtroying his own Kingdom* (4). Indeed, he has fairly turned the tables upon SATAN; and ſhewn us, that he can make full as good an uſe of a POSSESSION from below (5), as of an INSPIRATION from above.

III. The Reader remembers how contemptuouſly Mr. Weſley has ſpoken of *Orthodoxy*, or *true belief*; even to the queſtioning whether it makes *any part of Religion at all*; certain is he, that, at beſt, it makes *but a very ſlender part*. "It is a point, ſays he, we chiefly inſiſt upon, "that Orthodoxy, or right Opinion, is at beſt "but a very ſlender part of Religion, if any "part of it at all (6)." This was done to *take in* as many as he could, from amongſt the *Sectaries*; but when he wants to *take off* as many as he can, from amongſt the *Churchmen*, then *Orthodoxy*, or true belief, is like

(4) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 56.
(5) See p 103.
(6) Mr. Weſley's plain Account, &c. p. 4.

Metho-

Methodiſm, the Unum Neceſſarium: or, to ſpeak more properly, *Orthodoxy* and *Methodiſm* are but two words for the ſame thing. "About "a thouſand people ſtood patiently while I "ſimply deſcribed the *plain old Religion of the* "*Church of England*, which is now almoſt every "where ſpoken againſt, under the new name "of *Methodiſm* (7)."

IV. We have ſeen him (in the true Spirit of a Sectary) inviting and even provoking *Perſecution*, as the only means of making the *good ſeed take root*: For, after having ſown it in the mud and ſlime of *field-preaching*, he then, by a kind of Ægyptian Huſbandry (8), draws together whole droves of obſcene Animals, who ruſh furiouſly in, and trample it about; but this, as that Mother-ſeat of ARTS may have informed him, only made it ſpring up the better.—— "The Mob, ſays he, gathered in great num- "bers about my door, and quite cloſed me "in. *I rejoiced and bleſſed God, knowing this* "*was the time I had long been looking for* (9)." But, miſtake him not. A *Perſecution* he certainly wiſhed, and as diligently ſought. But it was for his beloved Saints, who, as he ſays, wanted it (1), who hungered after it; not for himſelf,

(7) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 90.

(8) ——in ſuum quiſque rus jacto ſemine, Sues immittit, et ſatis conculcato a Suibus ſemine, meſſem deinde expectat. *Herod.* l. ii. c. 14.

(9) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 56.

(1) See p. 138.

who had no ſtomach to it, eſpecially when it grew ſerious, as once upon a time it did.

In his ramble to *Georgia*, he got acquainted with one Mrs. Williamſon, (ſo he himſelf tells his ſtory) to whom he refuſed the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. She had done ſome *wrong*, it ſeems, *to her neighbour*. What it was, he does not tell us. The Uncle (he ſays) deſired he would declare in the Court-houſe, why he expelled Mrs. Williamſon from the holy Communion. But he declined it, as apprehending *many ill conſequences* might ariſe from ſo doing. What He would not declare, the Uncle did; and ſaid, that it was *in revenge for rejecting his*, Mr. Weſley's, *propoſals of marriage, and marrying Mr. Williamſon*. The Huſband proſecuted him for *defamation*: And the Wife, ſays Mr. Weſley, "ſwore and ſigned an affidavit, *inſi-*
" *nuating much more than it aſſerted*, but aſſerting,
" that he, Mr. Weſley, had many times pro-
" poſed marriage to her, all which propoſals ſhe
" had rejected."

In conſequence of this, "He is preſented
" by the *Grand Jury*, upon oath, as having
" broken the Laws of the Realm by ſpeaking
" and writing to Mrs. Williamſon againſt her
" huſband's conſent; by repelling her from
" the holy Communion, &c." The matter was now growing ſerious; the Georgians, he found, did not underſtand raillery, in the affair of ſpiritual Gallantry. It was time for him to look about him. In this diſtreſs, he began to have recourſe, as uſual, to his *revelations*—
" I conſulted my friends, *whether God did not*
" *call*

" *call me* to return to England. The reaſon " for which I left it had now no force, there " being no poſſibility, as yet, of inſtructing " the Indians: Neither had I, as yet, found " or heard of any Indians on the continent of " America, who had the leaſt deſire of being " inſtructed.——After deeply conſidering theſe " things; *they were unanimous that I ought to* " *go*; *but not yet.*" However, the Magiſtrate quickened his pace. He was declared *an Enemy to, and Hinderer of, the public peace.*—" I again " (ſays he) conſulted my friends, who agreed " with me, *that the time we looked for was now* " *come.*" The Reader, who has ſeen him ſo long *languiſh for perſecution*, will conclude, he was now preparing to meet it with the conſtancy of a Martyr. No ſuch matter. He was preparing for his flight. But to hide his poltronery in a bravado, he gave public notice of his Apoſtolical intention. On which the Magiſtrates ordered that he ſhould firſt find ſecurity to appear, when ſummoned, to anſwer the Charge brought againſt him. But he refuſing, they publiſhed a Placart, " requiring all the Officers " and Centinels to prevent his going out of " the Province; and forbidding any perſons to " aſſiſt him in ſo doing." Things were now come to a Criſis: and Mr. J. Weſley, on the whole, thought it beſt to retreat without beat of drum; and to ſteal a march upon the Enemy. ——" I ſaw clearly (ſays he) the hour was " come for leaving this place. And as ſoon as " *Evening Prayer* was over, [for Prayer muſt " always make a part in his Stratagems] about " *eight o'clock*, the tide then ſerving, *I ſhook off*

"*the duſt of my feet* (2)." A very pleaſant way, truly, of acting the *Apoſtle*. But if he made the path eaſy for himſelf, he took care to render it doubly perplexed for his Followers. He left, we ſee, his *little Flock* in the lurch, to anſwer, as they could, for the crimes objected to their runaway Paſtor.

But had his *longings for perſecution* been *without Hypocriſy*, he had here the faireſt occaſion of honeſtly indulging himſelf to the full. He had gone as far as *Georgia* for it. The truth of his Miſſion was brought in queſtion by the Magiſtrate, and decried by the People; not ſo much for his falſe doctrines, as his *falſe morals*. The honour of the Goſpel was wounded through the Sides of its pretended Miſſionary. There was but one way to ſupport its credit, the way the firſt Chriſtian Preachers always took, the offering up themſelves for the Truth they preached, and for the Integrity they profeſſed. Inſtead of this, our paltry Mimic thinks he had diſcharged an Apoſtolic office, when he applied to himſelf an Apoſtolic phraſe,—*I ſhook off the duſt of my feet*, ſays he; much eaſier done than ſhaking off his infamy. Jeſus, indeed, orders his Followers to *ſhake off the duſt of their feet*, where the inhabitants would not receive their Doctrine, that they might not throw away their time in vain: But he never directed it as a Trial-ordeal of innocence when they were accuſed of immoralities, and the honour of the Miſſion concerned. When Paul and Silas had been impriſoned,

(2) Journ. from his embarking for Georgia, to his return to London, p. 46 to 56.

and otherwiſe evil intreated at Philippi, neither the *Miracle* nor the *Magiſtrate*, (when each, in their turn, had ſet open the Priſon doors) could perſuade them to ſtir a ſtep till they had procured all honourable ſatisfaction to their injured Characters (3). But what do I ſpeak of the caſes, in which the *prudence*, recommended by our great Maſter, directs his Diſciples to *avoid*, or the *courage*, with which he inſpires and enables them to *dare*, the rage of PERSECUTION. We are now on the detection of a HYPOCRITE, who expreſſed his longings for *perſecution*; who invited it, who provoked it, in a Country where the Magiſtrate reſtrained and forbad it; and yet ran away from it when his own honour, as well as that of his *little flock*, ſhould have induced him to oppoſe himſelf to it; and where the Magiſtrate, by his own account, was forward enough and ready to oblige him. But he ran away, like a Coward, on the wings of *Prayer* and the *Tide*: Henceforth, the hatred of this unhoſpitable Shore, and the horrour of the entertainment there prepared for him, made ſuch an impreſſion on his temper and his fancy, that he lets ſlip no occaſion of revenge. For when the good man was got back to Europe, and even forced to beat it on the hoof as far as Hernhuth, in Germany, before he could get into a *Land of Chriſtians* (4), he overtook, as he

(3) Acts xvi.

(4) "At Weymar, we came before, I know not "what great man (I believe the Duke) who, after "many queſtions, aſked, what we were going ſo far "as *Hernhuth* for? I anſwered, To SEE THE PLACE "WHERE THE CHRISTIANS LIVE. He looked

he tells us, in a little village on the road, "A "large number of *Switzers*, Men, Women, "and Children, singing, dancing, and mak- "ing merry, being all going to make their "fortunes in GEORGIA. *Looking upon them* "(says he) AS BEING DELIVERED INTO MY "HANDS BY GOD, I plainly told them, what "manner of place it was. If they now leap "into the Fire with open eyes, their *blood is on* "*their own head* (5)." It would be hard to guess how he came to *look upon these Switzers as delivered into his hands by God*, unless he believed, God was bound to revenge all his squabbles with the young Wenches of his *Bands*, (which, by his Journals, we find were not a few) and that therefore *God prepared* these Switzers for the Instruments of his Vengeance. He made a proper use of them; he *opened their eyes*; and so, in all likelihood, deprived a British Colony of many useful hands.

V. We have seen above, how he set *worldly prudence*, *Christian prudence*, and, in a word, every thing which bears the name of PRUDENCE, at defiance; denouncing it to be the *Bane of Religion*, and the *Instrument of the Devil*. This was but necessary to inflame the *madness* of his Followers. But a very different language is required when the *ambition* of his RIVALS is to be restrained. Then PRUDENCE is the very balm of Gilead, the assuager of hurt

"hard, and let us go." Journ. from Feb. 1, 1737-8, to his return from Germany, p. 45.

(5) Journ. from August 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 6.

Minds,

Minds, and the great reſtorative of ſickening Peace.

But we ſhould take the affair from its beginning. So early as in the year thirty-nine, he began to ſuſpect, that he ſhould have RIVALS in his Apoſtolic office.—"I came into my "old Room at Oxford, from which I went "to Georgia. Here, muſing on the things "that were paſt, *and remembering how many that "came after me were preferred before me*, I opened my Teſtament, &c. (6)" For you muſt know, Reader, that, of all the *Superſtitions* (and they were not a few) which ſtruggled for Dominion with *fanaticiſm* in the Microcoſm of this holy Man, the SORTES SANCTORUM were the Chief. A ſpecies of Divination to which, St. Auſtin tells us, the good Chriſtians of his time had recourſe, rather than conſult the Devil, like their pagan Neighbours. To this favorite folly, our Miſſionary refers all his doubts. It is his Urim and Thummim; and he applies it as freely and irreverently to his occaſions, as a Village Conjurer does his *Sieve* and *Sheers*. At this time, indeed, it afforded him but ſmall relief. He ſunk ſo far in his deſpondency, *as to doubt whether God would not lay him aſide, and ſend other labourers into his harveſt* (7). We ſoon ſee what it was that gave him theſe cruel twitches: A *Rival*, and he no ſmall One, the famed Mr. WHITEFIELD; who now began to ſet up for himſelf;

(6) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 14, 15.

(7) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 60.

and,

and, indeed, as much the madder of the two, to ingrofs the favour of the Rabble. While the Rivalſhip continued on a tolerable footing, Mr. J. Weſley contented himſelf with, now and then, giving his *beloved in Chriſt* a fly wipe of contempt, as occaſion preſented; and under the ſaintly ſymbol of *praiſing God for him.*—— "I read prayers, and Mr. *Whitefield* preached. "How wiſe is God in giving *different talents* to "different Preachers! even the *little impro-* "*prieties both of his language and manner*, were "a means of profiting many who would not "have been touched by a *more correct diſcourſe*, "or a *more calm and regular* manner of ſpeak- "ing (8)." This, we ſee, was full in his teeth; and by a ſide wind came up to that *Maſter-Preacher*, who is inſinuated to be more correct, and calm, and graceful, in his Pulpit-Manners. Notwithſtanding this, Mr. *Whitefield* went on triumphantly; and being ambitious to advance himſelf on the necks of his Fellows, taught FAITH ALONE; and offered FREE GRACE to a People little diſpoſed to purchaſe it. Mr. J. Weſley was an Advocate for WORKS: but he muſt do them himſelf, if he expected any good from them, in this Contention. For an equivalent, therefore, to Mr. Whitefield's *ſpiritual Graces*, He, like another Moſes, diſpenſed his *temporal Bleſſings*. Particularly, in the ART of Healing; for he would truſt no longer to the GIFT, full as his Journals are of his *miraculous Cures*. It was now, he found, high time to ſet up a *regular Practice*.

(8) Journ. from July 25, 1749, to Oct. 30, 1751. p. 24.

Accord-

Accordingly, he told his People how deeply read he was in Medicine, which he had ſtudied at Oxford. And to prove himſelf no Quack, he publiſhed a whole book of Receipts or Remedies for all the common Diſtempers of life. At the ſame time, he let the better Sort underſtand, he was well ſkilled in the *medicina Mentis*. He had given innumerable flirts of contempt, in his Journals, againſt HUMAN LEARNING: and, indeed, of what uſe could Learning be in a Religion like that which he propagated? In which, as he aſſures us, *Orthodoxy or right belief made a very ſlender part, if any part at all.* Yet when now he had to ſtuggle with a Rival *pro aris & focis*, no means were to be left untried to ſecure his Dominion. He therefore plainly enough informs them, that he was ready to teach, in a better and more expeditious way than was hitherto known, even to the UNIVERSITIES, two eminent parts of this decried Learning, namely, *Rhetoric* and *Ethics*. "This "week (ſays he) I read over with ſome young "men a Compendium of *Rhetoric*, and a Syſ- "tem of *Ethics*. I ſee not why a man of "tolerable underſtanding may not learn, in ſix "months time, more of *ſolid Philoſophy* than is "learned at Oxford in four (perhaps ſeven) "years (9)." Did ever JESUIT play his part better? Yet even this would not do. FREE GRACE bore down all before it; and Mr. Weſley was at laſt forced, as in a deſperate caſe, to have recourſe to that paltry quack remedy, which he had ſo much ſcorned and

(9) Journ from Nov. 25, 1746, to July 20, 1750. p. 14.

execrated,

execrated, I mean PRUDENCE.—" I believed " (says he) both love and justice required that " I should speak my sentiments freely to Mr. " Wh—— concerning the Letter he had pub- " lished, said to be *in answer to my sermon on* " *free Grace*. The sum of what I observed " to him was this: 1. That it was quite IM- " PRUDENT to publish it at all, as being only " *the putting of weapons into their hands, who* " *loved neither the one nor the other*. 2. That " if he was constrained *to bear his testimony*, " AS HE TERMED IT, against the error I was " in, he might have done it by publishing a " treatise on this head without ever calling " my name in question."—Here our Journalist can treat with scorn that very cant in which himself so much abounds, the applying Scripture phrases to the impertinence of modern occurences.—" However (adds Mr. Wesley) " he had said enough—to make an open (and " probably irreparable) breach between him " and me: seeing, *for a treacherous Wound*, " *and for the* BEWRAYING OF SECRETS *every* " *friend will depart* (1)."

Without doubt, the Reader will be curious to know what these *Secrets* were, which had been so ill kept between these two *Free Masons*. But the purpose of this Discourse is not to prejudice the Readers against this extraordinary Man, from anecdotes on tradition, or from *secrets bewrayed*; but to enable them to form a judgment of his pretences, from what he

(1) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 78.

him-

himself has openly recorded of himself, and frequently repeated, to the World. What I would have them observe on the last quoted passage, is only this, That Mr. J. Wesley, after so total an estrangement from WORLDLY PRUDENCE, has, at length, in his distresses, been forced to take shelter with her. And for his first visit, it must be owned, he acquits himself very well after so long an absence.—The Letter Mr. Whitefield had written should not have been published, as "*it was putting* "*Weapons into the hands of the common Enemy.*" —It should not have been published, as it tended to a *Schism* in the Society.—If he must needs publish it, "*he should not have called Mr. Wesley's* "*name in question*," as this tended to a breach between these two fast friends.—And if he (Mr. Wesley) should never consent to have this breach closed, he was justified in PRUDENCE, since the *Wise man* says, *from a treacherous wound and bewraying secrets every friend will depart*; which he understands to signify, *every friend ought to depart*. Indeed, the Reader may object, that there was one expedient of PRUDENCE left untried, which was, the *meeting his quondam friend half way*. Mr. Wesley was no enemy to this use of PRUDENCE, as we shall see presently. But Mr. Whitefield was too formidable a Rival with whom to compromise, or even to yield an inch. A less considerable Opposer might be managed this way, without danger; and then his PRUDENCE directs him to pursue it.—"I laboured (says he) to convince "Mr. G—— that he had *not done well in con-* "*futing* (as he termed it) the Sermon I had "preached the Sunday before. But he was "abso-

" absolutely above conviction (2)."—Would not *prudence* now have justified him in leaving a man *above conviction*, to the error of his own ways? Surely a less consummate *prudence* than Mr. J. Wesley's would have done so. But he will not leave Mr. G—— so unkindly. " I " then asked (says he) *Will you meet me half* " *way?* I will never *preach publickly* against you. " Will not you against me? But he disclaimed " any such agreement."—When PRUDENCE would have advised him not to *preach publickly* against the Body of that Clergy to which, he says, he belongs, then is PRUDENCE the *bane of Religion*, the *mystery of Iniquity*, and the Whore of Babylon herself. But when she prompts him to tempt a Brother of the same trade to *meet half way*, and not to *preach publickly* against him, then is PRUDENCE of heavenly birth, and sent for the assistance of the Saints: at present, indeed, honestly employed in the charitable errand of inviting Mr. G—— to play the *Hypocrite* with him: For he declares Mr. G—— to be *absolutely above conviction*; that is, in conscience unable to stir a step; which, too, was his own case: Yet, in the same breath, he proposes *to meet him half way*. But Mr. G—— approved himself the honester man. From all this we have reason to conclude, that Mr. J. Wesley, amidst his warmest exclamations against *Worldly* PRUDENCE, against *Christian* PRUDENCE, and against PRUDENCE of every denomination, had it still in petto to employ a succedaneum, on a pressing occasion; which

(2) Journ. from July 20, 1750, to Oct. 28, 1754. p. 81.

he,

he, indeed, calls PRUDENCE; but which, to ſave the credit of his conſiſtency, he had better have let go under its true name of CRAFT.

Thus have I endeavoured to tear off the Maſk from the furious and deformed viſage of Fanaticiſm and Seduction. The power of Religion hath enabled me: and the intereſts of Religion have excited me to this attempt; nothing ſo much diſcrediting the *Doctrine of* GRACE as theſe counterfeit impreſſions of the Spirit of God. For, ſince the deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt was no longer in *the ruſhing mighty wind*, but in *the ſtill ſmall voice*, licentious men have been but too apt to conclude, either that GRACE was an imaginary Power; or at moſt, that it was no other than that aſſiſtance which the divine attribute of *Goodneſs*, as diſcoverable by natural light, was always ready to impart to diſtreſſed and helpleſs Mortals; juſt as they would perſuade themſelves that REDEMPTION is nothing elſe than that reſtoration to God's favour, which his mercy, diſcoverable too by the ſame light, prepares and lays open to repentant Sinners.

The Reader, in concluſion, will take notice, that the order I have here followed, is that which is beſt adapted to ſhorten the controverſy, and to cut off all chicane and evaſion.

1. I have ſingled out the Founder and Leader of the Sect, that no one may have pretence to ſay, that what, He is here ſhewn to teach and practiſe, is not true and genuine METHODISM.

2. I have

2. I have confined my remarks to his own adventures, recorded by his own pen, and here fairly quoted in his own words; that no one may have pretence to say, I have foolishly confided in false or uncertain reports; or unjustly made the Sect answerable for the indiscretions and and absurdities of every obscure FIELD PREACHER.

3. I have taken the Methodists at their word, when they call themselves members of the Church of England, that I might not run the hazard of confounding both the Reader and myself with long and blind scholastic disputations on *original Sin*, *irresistable Grace*, and *justifying Faith*; on *Regeneration*, *Election*, *Reprobation*, and *the immerit of good Works*. To their MODE of teaching, and not to the *things* taught, I confine my discourse. Of *that*, every reader can judge; and of *that*, he has a sure rule to judge by, the MARKS delivered by the holy Apostle St. James of the *Wisdom which is from above:* MARKS, which (for weighty reasons already explained) refer mostly to the *mode* of teaching; and which, if not found in this new *mode* of methodist-teaching, are sufficient to convict it of imposture.

BOOK

BOOK III.

CHAP. I.

I Now turn, for what remains of this Diſcourſe, to thoſe ſober Miniſters of the Eſtabliſhed Church, who hold themſelves bound to obey its DISCIPLINE as well as to profeſs its DOCTRINES.

If any good uſe can be made of what has been already ſaid, it will be chiefly promoted by theſe Reverend Men, who, in honour of the Church which they ſerve, and in gratitude to the State by which they are protected, will make it their firſt care to ſupport that moſt juſt of all Public Laws, the Law of TOLERATION: Which, how long ſoever obſtructed in its paſſage to us, and how late ſoever arrived amongſt us, is certainly of DIVINE ORIGINAL. Nor will ſuch Men ever venture to *refine* upon it (which will always be to *weaken* it) by idle diſtinctions between the *letter* and the *ſpirit* of the Law. For between theſe, in well compoſed Laws, there is no difference; the *letter* being no other than the language and expreſſion of the *ſpirit*. Indeed, one would wonder, they ſhould ever have been oppoſed, did we not know how ready *Superſtition* has always been to ſupport the intereſts of bad Policy, in vitiating both the intellects and the morals of Mankind. God once gave a *preparatory Religion* to a ſe-

a ſelect People, under the name of LAW, by which the future diſpenſation was half-revealed and half-hidden. In ſuch a *Law* the *letter* and the *ſpirit* were neceſſarily different. A difference, which the Miniſters to whom the propagation of this future Religion has been intruſted have been much accuſtomed to inculcate. Hence Superſtition, in this, as in many other caſes of the Jewiſh Law ill underſtood, very abſurdly applied that diſtinction, to Civil Laws and compacts; where the full meaning was inſtant, and ſhould be obvious; and where, as far as there was any real difference, ſo far were theſe Laws of defective Compoſition.

The Friend of *Toleration* therefore will not, I ſay, make any diſtinction, or contend for any difference, between the *letter* and the *ſpirit* of this Sovereign Law of Nature. This miſchievous employment will be the taſk of him who regards it but as a temporary expedient, forced upon us, to prevent greater evils. And as, amongſt the friends of *Toleration*, the Engliſh Clergy, ſeduced by a common error, were not amongſt the firſt to give it a cordial reception, it ſeems incumbent on their Succeſſors, (who were however amongſt the firſt to detect that *common error*) to obliterate the memory of the old prejudices of their Order, by the warmeſt patronage and ſupport of what their more reaſonable principles now ſo much approve.

Their friendly attachment to this Law will be beſt ſeen by their regarding it, firſt, as doing honour, in a *ſpiritual view*, to a CHRISTIAN CHURCH; implying confidence in the truth of its con-

conſtitution, and that it will receive no detriment by a compariſon with any other, how near or cloſe ſoever they may be ſet together.

And ſecondly, as beſtowing benefit, in an *eccleſiaſtical view*, on the NATIONAL CHURCH; it being a certain Maxim That an *Eſtabliſhed Religion*, under a *Toleration* and a *Teſt*, will always go on enlarging its bounds; ſince the reſtraint which this latter Law impoſes, is ſo light, that it is conſidered rather as a ſmall inconvenience than an injury; a burthen ſo eaſy as not to exaſperate, but barely to excite in men a diſpoſition to remove it.

In a word, the CHURCH in which religious liberty is cordially entertained and zealouſly ſupported, may be truly called CHRISTIAN: for if *the mark of the beaſt* (3) be PERSECUTION, as the ſacred volumes decypher it; well may we put TOLERATION as the *ſeal of the living God* (4). This then is our preſent boaſt.

True philoſophy, ſo lately cultivated, and now happily made ſubſervient to the Truths of Religion, hath rectified many of thoſe Doctrines which the ſtill-miſapplied aid of the *falſe* had deformed. Nor ſhould the HIERARCHY (much honoured of late in the happy recovery of its ancient Ornaments, the Prelates of high birth and noble lineage) be denied the praiſe, ſo juſtly due, for its ſhare in this reform. To men of Family, we are taught, by experience, to aſcribe an innate generoſity of mind, which

(3) Revel. xvi. 2. (4) Revel. vii. 2.

in-

inclines them to whatever is polite and decent in *private* life; and, in *public*, disposes them to support the rights of humanity and society. They are reckoned to be the low-born and Cell-bred *number*, in whose minds Bigotry and bitter Zeal are apt to get root and overspread. So that the Church may promise to itself great advantages from the genial lustre which this fair Accession to the sacred College is now deriving to it. DECUS ET TUTAMEN, is the motto inscribed on every Prelate's mitre; most certain to be read in every Prelate's breast. The *first* shines naturally out in the birth and manners of every noble Dignitary; the *latter*, his solemn engagements will make him studious to discharge.

But this great Work will not be done by Talents at large, but by that sort of Talents only, which is suited to its sacred nature. Every Order and Station in Society hath its appropriated and proper *tone*; where a consent in one common key makes that harmony which gives perfection to the Whole. It should be the care therefore of every Member of that Whole, to fit his manners and accomplishments to the natural *tone* of the Body which he honours, or by which he may think himself honoured. This is so true, that manners and accomplishments, foreign to the Profession, nay, tho' in general estimation, of a superior kind, yet, when thus preposterously introduced, destroy all that concord which maintains its *dignity* and *use*.

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On

On this occaſion, hear an old grecian Tale. A muſician at Athens became famous for a ſacred Lyre, deſcending to him, thro' a long race of Anceſtors, from the firſt Heroes and Demy-gods of Attica. Its Tone was ſo raviſhing, and the ſkill of the Maſter, in calling it out, ſo delicate and profound, that the Artiſt and his Lyre were always called upon to bear a principal part in the high Solemnities of that religious City. It happened, that in the midſt of one of theſe Celebrations, a chord of the Lyre broke. It was ſtrung in the ordinary manner with nerves, or what our muſical neighbours call, *corde de boyau*. But the enamoured Owner, to do all honour to ſo rare a wonder, unadviſedly ſupplied the broken ſtring, with one of SILVER. The conſequence proved fatal. The Lyre loſt all its harmony and ſweetneſs: it grew harſh and diſcordant. The People abhorred what before they had dwelt upon with raptures; and the unhappy Lyre, now the public execration, was hung up, a neglected thing, a ſilent monument of the folly of the too-fond Poſſeſſor.

Nor ſhould the great Body of the *Clergy* be forgotten on this occaſion, They who have approved themſelves no way *inferior* in an honeſt zeal for the ſupport of Chriſtian Liberty. If any ſtale particles of the *old leaven* ſtill remain, they lie perfectly inactive. A new Start-up Sect, indeed, will be apt to put them into a momentary ferment: and, on ſuch an occaſion, they will be eager to expoſe their evil nature.

Thus, the firſt appearance of METHODISM began to heat and irritate the miſtaken Zeal of ſome ill inſtructed men, againſt a new ſpecies of Fanaticiſm, which pretended to be of the Church, and yet inſolently affronted its *Diſcipline*; diſdaining to ſhelter itſelf under the peaceable ſhade of a legal Toleration: For theſe men, in their hearts, were enemies to this Law, as fanatic Sects generally are; who contend for religious Liberty, not becauſe they would obey conſcience, but becauſe they, an' pleaſe you, are the Advocates of Truth; *Liberty*, as well as *Dominion*, being, in their opinion, founded in GRACE. This, indeed, was a trying occaſion. But had thoſe good men conſidered that the *Methodiſts* provoked the Public patience merely to procure to themſelves a *mock perſecution*; for to more (as they very well knew) it could never amount in a State where the *honour* of the national Religion was ſecured by a *Toleration*, and the *ſafety* of it, by a *Teſt*; had they conſidered this, I ſay, they would have left theſe factious men to their own inventions.

Beſides, a fairer opportunity never offered itſelf, to do the Clergy credit. Had we appeared eaſy only with thoſe who had qualified themſelves to claim a legal Toleration, our acquieſcence might have been imputed to our impotency in contending with it. But by bearing patiently with *Methodiſm*, the Clergy might have ſhewn the World, that the *Toleration-Act* had their hearts, as well as their outward obedience; for this Sect profeſſed to be of the Church, and yet, at the ſame time, dared to

inſult its Diſcipline, and ſet its Governors at defiance; practices which no equitable indulgence would ſcreen from puniſhment. This was the time for the Clergy to vindicate their character from the calumnies of their enemies; and in general they wiſely laid hold on it: So that now they can be no longer ſuſpected of malevolence to the *Law of Toleration*, when, in a caſe where they were free from its influence, they yet bore with temper, and though provoked by inſolent defiance, connived at the behaviour of a Sect of Fanatics, over whom all Laws, divine and human, had given them juriſdiction.

But then, if we ſhew ourſelves thus rightly diſpoſed in favour of this divine principle of Toleration, where the Law hath left offenders againſt Church Government to the juſtice of its Rulers, much more diſpoſed ſhall we be to ſuffer the honeſt Sectary, who hath legally qualified himſelf for the enjoyment of his religious liberty, to poſſeſs it without trouble or controul.

When the Law of *Toleration* had once recognized this univerſal Right, it ſoon became apparent, that that other Law of prior date, the TEST (for the formation of *civil* Syſtems does not always, like the *natural*, begin at the right end) was now, by ſecuring the Rights of the national Church, become more neceſſary than ever for the peace of the State. For, by this Law, Sectaries were reſtrained from the exerciſe of certain *civil Offices*, which ſome men have been pleaſed to call *natural Rights:* and

we will not dispute with them about a word, for to no more does it amount, since it is confessed that Society could never have been formed without men's giving up some of their *natural rights*, in order to secure the peaceable enjoyment of the rest.

But it may so happen, by the Custom or Constitution of *Corporate Bodies*, that the conditional restraint which the *Test* imposeth, shall, by accident, become a benefit or advantage; as when a Sectarian member of a Corporation is appointed by his Body to discharge a very important though very onerous Office; and yet not permitted by the State to enter on it, but on conditions which his religious principles will not suffer him to comply with. For it having been, a long time, the custom for the Member, when nominated to this Office, to purchase, of the Body, an exemption, at a large price, called a *Fine*; when this came to be demanded of a dissenting Member, he naturally replied, that it could not equitably regard any but Such who *willingly* declined a permitted Office; certainly, not Those whom the *Law* had forbidden, by severe penalties, to discharge it. But to this so plausible a plea, it was thought a sufficient answer, "That the Law of whose restraint the dissenting Member would thus avail himself, was never intended for his advantage or emolument."

The question therefore to be decided was this, "Whether he who *cannot* serve is equally "obnoxious to the Fine, with him who *will* "*not?*"

" *not?*" and, to this day, it remains undetermined (5).

Now I humbly conceive, this queſtion can never be rightly reſolved, till the *true nature* of the TEST LAW be previouſly ſettled; and when that is done, it will, I ſuppoſe, be no longer diſputable.

Were this Law enacted to draw, or to drive, Diſſenters into the National Church, the prohibition, of ſerving Civil Offices, was certainly intended for a PUNISHMENT. If the Law were enacted only to keep Diſſenters out of thoſe Stations, in which, by hurting the Church, they would violate the peace of the State, it was as certainly intended for a RESTRAINT, only; and becomes a *puniſhment* but by accident.

Now were it intended for a PUNISHMENT, the *Fine* is moſt juſt and equitable: And then the reaſoning of the Body againſt the Member, " That the Legiſlature, by this Law, never " intended, the Diſſenter ſhould receive Civil " benefit and advantage," will not be without its force: For a *benefit* defeats the end of the Law.

But if the Teſt impoſe a RESTRAINT only, and it become a *puniſhment* but by *accident*, it may, without the leaſt evil influence on the Law, become a *benefit* likewiſe by *accident*. Nay, to hinder this fair Chance would be

(5) In the Spring of 1762.

highly unjuſt. For if, from the inevitable condition of human things, Particulars receive *damage* by a Law which reſpects the General, and which never had ſuch damage in its intention, it is but fit they ſhould have the ſame chance of a *benefit*, tho' equally without the intention of the Legiſlature.

Indeed, where the unprovided for, or unthought-of, Conſequence tends naturally to defeat the purpoſe of the Law, there the Interpreters of it will interpoſe, and declare the advantage taken to be againſt the Law; or, which amounts to the ſame thing, to be unſupported by it. But an accidental *benefit*, which ariſes from the *reſtraint* impoſed, ſeems better calculated to effect the end of the *Teſt law*, (which is to keep the enemies of the Church from office in the State) than a *damage*, which might tempt them to violate their conſcience: The *benefit* is, indeed, liable to abuſe, (and what is there in civil matters which is not ſo?) but this abuſe does not affect the purpoſe of the Law, which is to keep Sectaries out of Office. But let me not be miſunderſtood, as if any thing here ſaid, in favour of the ſectarian Member, was meant to include the *Occaſional Conformiſt*. For if ſuch a one think that he may, with his conſcience unhurt, *conform*, for the ſake of *lucrative* employments, he can never be permitted, on pretence of Conſcience, to plead the reſtrictive law, in order to evade thoſe which are *onerous*. And here let me further obſerve, that the Diſſenters will not ſeem to be in the propereſt circumſtances to claim the advantage of the diſtinction here laid down

down in their favour, till they have a little reformed their ideas of a *Test-law*. For, they have I think, in order to throw the greater odium upon it, generally represented the prohibition, which it imposes, as inflicted for a *Punishment*. Now we have shewn, that if our Law-givers intended a *Punishment*, it defeats their purpose, to connive at its becoming an *accidental benefit*. I only remark this for the sake of a general observation, That when Bodies of men, whether civil or ecclesiastical, suffer themselves to be misled by their passions and prejudices, their interests or resentments, the errors, they fall into, will always, sooner or later, turn upon themselves.

Now it appears, both from Reason and Fact, that the TEST is a *restrictive*, and not a *penal* Law, in the proper meaning of these terms.

1. If a Law may be understood in two senses, one of which supports its equity, while the other betrays its injustice, Reason directs us to adopt the first. To *punish* Sectaries, in order to bring them over to the national Religion, is plainly wrong: But to *restrain* Sectaries from hurting the national Religion is as plainly right. Therefore, though the intention of the Legislature had in this particular instance been doubtful, yet a general Law of a free People would admit of no other interpretation.

2. But the intention of the Legislature was not doubtful: and the reason of the thing is supported by fact. When this Law was made,

the *national Church* was deemed, in the public Opinion, to be in much danger both from Proteſtant and Popiſh Sectaries. In the early days of its eſtabliſhment indeed, the Government had endeavoured to bring Both into it; and many *penal Laws* were enacted for that purpoſe: But, at the time the *Teſt* became a Law, that viſionary and unjuſt project had been long dropt; and Government was content to confine its care to the *protection*, rather than *extenſion* of the national Church. Had this latter point been their aim, it was to be effected only by the vigorous execution of the old *penal* Laws then in being. The *Teſt* added no force to thoſe; but, on the contrary, greatly relaxed their vigour, by diſpoſing Government to repoſe their chief confidence, and ſeek their only remedy for diſorders, in this new-made Law.

And now may be ſeen the ſtrength of that Objection made to the *Teſt*, as it is legally inforced to affect the intereſts of Proteſtant Diſſenters, viz. "that its original and direct intention (a fact no one will deny) was to oppoſe to the machinations of Popery; and that therefore, thoſe being included only by accident, may very reaſonably be overlooked." But if the idea here given of the *Teſt-law* be the true, it is apparent, that the general, tho' not immediate purpoſe of the Legiſlature, in this Law, was to provide for the ſafety of the national Church, and that, for the ſake of the State, from what quarter ſoever the danger might ariſe. At one ſeaſon it might ſpring from *Popery*; at another from *Puritaniſm*; but the various

rious civil miſchiefs, conſequent on religious quarrels, were to be repelled, as they ſprung up, with equal vigilance and vigour. But let no one by this imagine, that a compariſon is here inſinuated between Popery and Puritaniſm. As Religions, they can no more be compared together, than a body irrecoverably corrupted, with one but ſlightly tainted. Yet, with regard to the civil miſchiefs which religious differences occaſion, we have experienced, that the lighteſt matters often produce as great, as the moſt important: And the ſurplice and croſs in baptiſm have alienated fellow Citizens againſt one another as fiercely as the tyrannic claim of a Supremacy, or the ſuperſtitious worſhip of dead men deified.

However, the nature and genius of the two Sects is ſufficiently diſcriminated by *tolerating* the one, and only (under ſuſpended penal laws) *conniving* at the other: But ſtill on the ſame *civil principles*; theſe laws not being directed againſt the religious errors of the *Church*, but the political perverſities of the *Court, of* ROME; which will not ſuffer its Subjects to give any reaſonable ſecurity for their allegiance to the ſupreme Magiſtrate: For with religious errors as ſuch, the State hath nothing to do, nor any right to attempt to repell or ſuppreſs them. They are the *civil miſchiefs* with which civil Society is concerned, the miſchiefs ariſing from religious quarrels when the two Parties are near equal in Power, (as I ſuppoſe they would ſoon be under a Toleration without a Teſt-law) and are ſet upon repreſſing one anothers *errors*.

And now, since so much hath been urged in behalf of the Dissenters, their Civil and Religious rights, they will bear to be reminded of one thing, in their turn; neither to abuse the *Toleration* themselves, nor to screen others in abusing it. And the case I am about to give of One, who, it is pretended, was thus skreened, will, I hope, excuse this freedom. It is indeed the case of One who, without doing much injury to our dissenting Brethren, can never be reckoned in their number. This miserable Buffoon, of whom I would be understood to speak, was suffered for near thirty years together to turn all RELIGION and MORALITY into ridicule; once, and, for some time, twice a week, in a licensed place of Devotion in the Capital of the Kingdom. A matter so much to the disgrace of Society, that They, on whom the scandal fell, thought proper to give out, that a vigorous prosecution of this Offender was ordered to be commenced; but that when it was known, the Dissenters took the alarm, as if the *Law of Toleration* was in danger, since this Impostor acted under the common protection of a Licence from *Hicks's Hall*.

Yet, whoever hindered the prosecution, could not but confess, that this was a very vile *abuse* of a most sacred Law: They could not but apprehend that for an abused Law to screen the Abuser from punishment, was making Law to EXECUTE itself, in a very different sense from what crafty Politicians have sometimes projected.

But

But from all that has been here ſaid in behalf of the *Law of Toleration*, let me not be underſtood as if I could ſuppoſe, or would inſinuate, that this Law has altered the nature of the crime going under the name of SCHISM, which is an unneceſſary ſeparation from the national Church; or, becauſe it hath taken all civil puniſhment from the offender, that therefore *Schiſm* is become harmleſs, and an empty name: and that, the Law in favour of *Schiſmatics*, like the Law in favour of WITCHES, had diſſipated only a frightful Fantom. It is true, that, in both Caſes, the Legiſlature acted for the ſame end, the reſtraint of injuſtice; but it was on very different principles: In the firſt caſe, they took off civil puniſhment from a *real crime*, not cognizable by a human Judicatory: and, in the latter, they removed an opprobrium from the Statute Book, which expreſſed a ſanguinary reſentment againſt an *imaginary one*.

Schiſm, or a cauſeleſs ſeparation from the national Church, is a crime, which, on all the principles of Law and Reaſon, deſerves condign puniſhment. But, of this ſeparation, whether with or without cauſe, there is no adequate Judge, but that Power who can diſtinguiſh between a well and an ill informed Conſcience. Very juſtly therefore did this Free Government remit the queſtion to a wiſer Tribunal. But in ſo doing it did not mitigate, but, by its indulgence, rather aggravate the Guilt, wherever it ſhall be found, hereafter, to exiſt. And how wiſely ſo doubtful a point was remitted thither, we may, in part, ſee

from the anſwer of the *foreign Divines*, to whoſe judgment, at the beginning of our Reformation, (when the quarrel between the Puritans and the Churchmen about Ceremonies and Diſcipline ran high) both Parties agreed to ſubmit. Thoſe prudent and honeſt men, when thus appealed unto, gave it as their opinion, that "the Puritans ought to conform, rather than make a ſchiſm; and that the Churchmen ought to indulge the other's ſcruple, rather than hazard one." A wiſe deciſion, and reaching much further, in religious matters, than to the ſingle caſe, to which it was applied.

Schiſm therefore is no leſs a crime now, that the Law conſigns over its puniſhment to a proper Judicature, than it was when civil Authority, blindly and ineffectually, interfered to vindicate the honour of Religion from this unhappy ſcandal.

Thus have we ſeen what *reputation* accrues to the Church of England, from the eſtabliſhment of this ineſtimable Law; and what *benefits* may further accrue to it by the prudent conduct of our Clergy, in its ſupport.

CHAP. II.

WHAT remains of my Subject, will be more particularly addreſſed to the Miniſters of Religion: who are ſurrounded with Enemies from various quarters; and inſulted

both by the attacks of INFIDELITY and FANATICISM.

Their defence therefore, is indeed of neceſſity to be as much diverſified; but it ſhould ſtill be under the ſafe-conduct, and with the ſimple Armour of TRUTH only. For it is not the honour of a fantaſtic *Sect of Philoſophy* which We are intruſted to ſupport; better committed to the care of thoſe who exerciſe the talents of its old Patrons, the SOPHISTS; neither is it the credit of a *Traditional Orthodoxy*, which, ſome of thoſe who are called FATHERS of the Church, have, of old, defended with the like arts and arms: But it is the ſimple GOSPEL of JESUS, equally abhorrent of *refinement* and *deceit*.

I cannot, nor indeed have I any juſt reaſon to ſuſpect, that the Engliſh Clergy will diſhonour ſo noble a Cauſe by any premeditated fraud. Yet the moſt Upright, in the heat of controverſy, (provoked, and perhaps alarmed at the extravagant powers which Libertines and Fanatics reciprocally aſcribe to REASON and to GRACE) have been but too apt to run into deſtructive extremes, depreciating, and even annihilating, ſometimes the One, and ſometimes the Other, as beſt ſerved the purpoſe they were then purſuing. Of which egregious folly, their Adverſaries have never failed to take advantage, by turning their own ill-faſhioned and worſe fabricated Arms againſt them. And this was eaſily done; ſince *Revealed Religion* derives its whole ſupport from the joint operation of theſe two Principles, *Reaſon* and *Grace*,

Grace, acting on the human mind with equal and unremitted vigour.

But to understand more sensibly the mischiefs arising from such ill-judged defences of Religion, I shall set before the Reader a capital Example of each of these EXTREMES, of which we are now speaking. From whence we may learn the use and necessity of keeping within that equal MEAN, which most effectually serves to detect and to expose the errors of either Adversary.

It hath ever been amongst the principal arts of Infidelity to make the most extravagant encomiums on HUMAN REASON; and, consequently, to profess the utmost regard and reverence for, what Unbelievers are pleased to call, NATURAL RELIGION. Under this cover, by the poorest sophistry and hypocrisy imaginable, they have accustomed themselves to undermine REVELATION. But now, What expedient, think you, did some warm defenders of Revelation employ to uphold its credit? You will naturally say, They took care to moderate the extravagant representations of these false friends of *Reason* and *natural Religion*; by marking out the just bounds of the human Faculties, and shewing, how far Reason extends her jurisdiction, and in what, she herself prescribes Submission: by explaining how necessary a foundation *natural Religion* is to the *Revealed*; how it coincides with it, is compleated by it, and so inseparably annexed to it, (as the foundation to its superstructure) that nothing can hurt the One which does not injuriously affect the

the Other; there being no objection, which the Logic of misapplied *Reason* can bring against *Revealed Religion*, which does not hold at least equally strong against the *Natural*.

This they did, you say, because This they ought to have done. Alas! they took a very different course. They declaimed against *human Reason*; they depressed it as extravagantly as their Adversaries had advanced it.—"Should you be so foolish, they told you, as to take it for your Guide, it would lead you to nothing but to sin and misery: that the Gospel disclaimed it, and went entirely on the surer ground of FAITH: that its confessed impotency in defence of *truths revealed*, may shew the absurdity of relying on it to discover *truths unrevealed*." Hence, they assured you, "that the Deists boasted System of *natural Religion* was a Chimera; and that what (under this name) they recommended to the adoration of their followers, was an Impostor, made up of just so much of the *revealed* as was of use to them in combating the rest:" Finally, they said, "that all religious knowlege of the Deity, and of man's relation to him, was *revealed*; and had descended traditionally down, (though broken and disjointed in so long a passage) from the *first Man*; who received it as he came out fresh from the forming hands of his Creator."

When our Enemies had gotten these indiscreet friends of Revelation at this advantage, they changed the attack, (for all Arms are indifferent to *them*, but in proportion to their present power of doing mischief) and now tried,

how

how *Revelation* was to be further ſhaken, on theſe new and extravagant principles of its Defenders.

I. Accordingly a certain maſked Buffoon undertook to turn *one part* of this Paradox againſt them, in a Diſcourſe to prove that REVELATION WAS NOT FOUNDED ON ARGUMENT; and tempered his irony with ſo grave and ſolemn a tone, that many good men miſtook this arch-enemy of all godlineſs to be, at worſt, but an over-warm promoter of it. He had two ends in this worthy attempt; the one, to diſcredit Religion; the other, to excite and encourage Fanatics to diſcredit it ſtill more.

A fairer Writer againſt Religion, becauſe a more open, took up the *other part* of the Paradox, with the ſame righteous deſign. And as the Buffoon had undertaken to ſhew that *Revealed Religion was not founded in argument*, ſo the Declaimer (6) ſets himſelf to prove that *natural Religion was not founded in common Senſe:* for, its exiſtence *depending on the moral attributes* of the Deity, his *juſtice* and *goodneſs*, this broacher of the laſt runnings of the FIRST PHILOSOPHY labours to ſhew that *juſtice* and *goodneſs* belong not to him, whoſe entire eſſence conſiſts in the *natural attributes* of *wiſdom* and *power* only. Hence, under the name of *natural Religion*, he ſlurs in upon us, an *irreligious* NATURALISM. And now *Revelation*, deprived of its foundation, *natural Religion*, and of its beſt defence and ornament, *human Reaſon*, lies

(6) Lord Bolingbroke.

a ſcorn

a ſcorn to Unbelievers, and a prey to Fanatics and Enthuſiaſts.

But all this hath not yet taught theſe wayward Divines, wiſdom. We have lately ſeen them, even at the Fountain of Science, the Univerſity, (7) attempting to ſupport in good earneſt the wretched paradox which Mr. —— had ſo miſchievouſly advanced in jeſt. And yet one ſhould be utterly at a loſs to gueſs in what the wit or wiſdom of it lay, whether advanced in earneſt or in jeſt. But a miſchievous Heart will at any time riſque the reputation of its head-piece to give the alarm to ſober piety; and a warm Head diſcloſes, without fear or wit, the rancour of its boſom, to vilify and beſpatter ſuperior Reaſon. Otherwiſe, to aſk, *Whether Chriſtianity was founded in Reaſon or in Faith*, would be deemed juſt as wiſe a queſtion, as *Whether St. Paul's Clock was founded in Mechaniſm or in Motion?* Since, if it be found to have *motion*, we neceſſarily conclude that *motion* to be regulated by *mechaniſm:* So, if the vital principle of Chriſtianity be *Faith*, we neceſſarily conclude it to be ſuch a *Faith*, as was formed, and may be ſupported, on the rules and principles of *human Reaſon*. A wild Indian, perhaps, might imagine that the *Clock* was animated by a Spirit; and an Enthuſiaſt, ſtill wilder than he, may, for ought I know, conclude that *Chriſtianity* riſes only out of internal impulſe. But ſurely none but a Buffoon or a Fanatic would, for his credit in jeſt, or for his intereſt in good earneſt, diſcard the uſe

(7) Oxford.

of

of Reaſon in conſulting for his *future* happineſs, when he has already found it ſo uſeful in procuring his *preſent*. Both the future and the preſent are acquired by the right adaption of *means* to *ends*: and this adaption, I ſuppoſe, will be confeſſed by all to be in the ſole province of REASON. Nor has this heaven-appointed Guide ever given any juſt cauſe of complaint or jealouſy. When men ſee themſelves bewildered, they ought to ſuſpect themſelves: and, I believe, on enquiry, they will always find, that they had been directing *Reaſon* when they ſhould have been directed by her. But the Paſſions and Affections, which have occaſioned *her* diſcredit, go on, in their illuſions, to excite *our* diſtruſt.

II. Again, theſe indiſcreet friends of Religion, while they were thus puſhing the common Adverſary, with theſe imaginary advantages gained by the depreſſion of human reaſon, did not advert to the miſchiefs they were letting in, at the oppoſite quarters of *Superſtition* and *Fanaticiſm*. POPERY can only ſtand and flouriſh on the foundation of *implicit faith*; and the fervours of ENTHUSIASM ſoon riſe into madneſs, when unchequed by Reaſon. The PRIEST expects of you to renounce your Underſtanding before he will undertake to reconcile you to the Church of Rome; but, indeed, when that is over, he permits you to take up as much of it again, as will ſerve you to juſtify your Apoſtaſy. The quarrel, which the FANATIC has to it, is more ſerious. He is ever feeling its ill effects; and therefore his averſion to it is immortal. When *Ignatius Loyola* was

in

in the Meridian of his Fervours, ſome of the writings of *Eraſmus* chanced to fall into his hands. He was at firſt ſeduced, by the charms of the compoſition, to look into them; but finding they had, before he was aware, inſenſibly damped the inflammation of his Zeal; he caſt them from him with abhorrence and execration. The very ſame diſaſter, Mr. *J. Weſley* informs us, once befell himſelf, in his converſe with the ſober followers of *Eraſmus*; inſomuch that he was ſoon forced, he tells us, to avoid them, as the *bane of all Religion*. "I avoid that BANE OF ALL RELIGION, the *company of good ſort of men, as they are called. Theſe inſenſibly undermine all my reſolution, and ſteal away what little* ZEAL *I have* (8)." If this be true, though they *ſteal but Traſh*, yet they *leave him poor indeed*; as his quondam Maſter has lately obſerved. "Your ſtrictures upon Meſſieurs of "the Foundery, and the Tabernacle, &c. "(ſays he to a friend) are very juſt. Theſe "gentlemen ſeem to have no other bottom to "ſtand upon but that of ZEAL (9)." Indeed, againſt ſo dangerous an Enemy as SOBER SENSE, the *Fanatic* cannot be too carefully guarded. And therefore, he never thinks himſelf ſecure from the miſchiefs of *Reaſon*, till he has, with the ſame hoarſe clamours that the metamorphoſed Clowns in the Fable, purſued Latona and her godlike Iſſue; driven away from the neighbourhood of the Saints, both

(8) Journ. from Aug. 12, 1738, to Nov. 1, 1739. p. 31.

(9) Mr. W. Law's Collection of Letters, &c. p. 189.

Reaſon,

Reaſon, and her fair and celeſtial Offspring, NATURAL RELIGION and HUMAN LEARNING.

Mr. J. WESLEY, who is ready to exhibit to us every feature of Fanaticiſm in its turn, has, I fear, been kept ſo long upon the Scene, as to tire out his Audience; he ſhall therefore be only once again exhibited, to teſtify, in a word or two, his civilities to *natural Reaſon* and *natural Religion*; and then diſmiſſed for good. As to the firſt, he frankly tells us, The Father of *lies* was the Father of *reaſonings* alſo: "I obſerved, (ſays he) every day more and "more, the advantage *Satan* had gained over "us. Many were thrown into idle *reaſon-*"*ings*"—And again—"Many of our Siſters "are ſhaken. Betty and Eſther H. are *grie-*"*vouſly torn* by *reaſonings* (1)."—His civilities to NATURAL RELIGION, and to that eminent Writer who has ſo well explained the nature of this firſt great gift of God to Man, follow next: "Meeting with a French man of New Orleans "(ſays Mr. Weſley) he gave us a full and parti-"cular account of the *Chicaſaws*:—And hence "we could not but remark, What is THE "RELIGION OF NATURE, *properly ſo called*, "*or that Religion which flows from natural Rea-*"*ſon, unaſſiſted by Revelation.*" He then ſpeaks of their manners in War.—Their way of living in Peace follows in theſe words; "They "do nothing but eat and drink and ſmoak "from Morning till Night, and in a manner

(1) Journ. from Nov. 1, 1739, to Sept. 3, 1741. p. 8. and 17.

"from

" from Night till Morning. For they rise at " any hour of the night when they wake, and " after eating and drinking as much as they " can, go to sleep again. See THE RELIGION " OF NATURE *truly* DELINEATED (2)." What is chiefly curious in this account is, that Mr. Wesley professes to shew us what that Religion is which is *properly called natural, or that which flows from* NATURAL REASON *unassisted by* REVELATION, and yet he gives us, in its stead, only man's *natural manners*, which flow not from his *reason*, but from his *passions and appetites* only; in an example, where *Reason* may be rather said to have a capacity of existence than actually to exist, as being alike inert and void of power whether the *Chicasaw* be waking or asleep.

As to HUMAN LEARNING, if the zealous Mr. W. Law does not assault this more rudely than his forward Pupil has insulted NATURAL RELIGION, yet he returns much oftener to the Charge. The last Legacies, which this bountiful Gentleman hath bestowed upon the Public, are *A Collection of Letters*, &c. and *An Address to the Clergy*, &c. In these two Works the hapless Author of the *Divine Legation*, is pointed at, on every occasion of *abuse*, and held up as the grand Apostate from *Grace* to *Human Reason*; and this chiefly, for denying (what indeed, I neither deny nor affirm, for I take it to be nonsense) That " *Divine Inspiration is* ESSEN- " TIAL *to Man's first created state, and vainly*

(2) Journ. from his embarking for Georgia, to his return to London, p. 44-5.

" *think-*

" *thinking to find out a middle way*, between this " and no inſpiration at all, *namely*, *that the* " *Spirit's ordinary influence occaſionally aſſiſts the* " *faithful* (3)." For this, and for ſome few things beſides, ſuch as a charge of Spinoziſm on his beloved Behmeniſm, I have the honour to be plentifully, though *ſpiritually* railed at, whenever he fancies he ſees me in the Retinue of HUMAN LEARNING.

He lays it down as a Poſtulatum " That " whatever comes not IMMEDIATELY from " GOD can have nothing *godly* in it. There- " fore what comes IMMEDIATELY from SELF, " ſuch as NATURAL REASON, however out- " wardly coloured, can have no better a na- " ture within than the very Works of the " DEVIL (4)."

Now the fruit of *natural reaſon* being HUMAN LEARNING; (indeed, according to this account, more properly than men were aware of, called *prophane Learning*) he thus deſcants upon it.

Firſt of all, he aſſures us, it has nothing to do with Religion. " Where can God's *King-* " *dom be come*, but where every other power, " but his, is at an end, and driven out?——- " What now have Parts and Literature and the " natural Abilities of man to do here? juſt as " much as they can do at the Reſurrection of " the dead; for all that is to be done here is

(3) See p. 12 and 25 of *the Addreſs to the Clergy.*

(4) Addreſs, p. 57.

" nothing

" nothing elſe but *Reſurrection* and *Life*.—
" Yet vain man would be thought to do *ſome-*
" *thing* in this *kingdom of Grace*—becauſe he has
" happened to be made a Scholar, has run
" through all the Languages and Hiſtories, has
" been long exerciſed in conjectures and criti-
" ciſms, and has his head full of all notions,
" theological, poetical, and philoſophical, as
" a Dictionary is full of all ſort of words.
" Now let this ſimple queſtion decide the whole
" matter here: Has this great Scholar any
" more power of ſaying to this mountain, *Be*
" *thou removed hence and caſt into the Sea*, than
" the illiterate Chriſtian hath (2)." To this reaſoning againſt *human Learning*, in its uſe to Religion, little can be oppoſed. For it is very certain *human Learning* can neither *raiſe the Dead*, nor *remove Mountains*.

But it is not only uſeleſs in *Religion*, but is of infinite miſchief.

For 1. It nouriſheth PRIDE. " The pierc-
" ing Critic may, and naturally will, grow in
" *pride*, as faſt as his ſkill in words diſcovers
" itſelf. And *every kind of knowlege* that ſhews
" the Orator, the Diſputer, the Commentator,
" the Hiſtorian, his own powers and abilities,
" are the ſame temptation to him that Eve had
" from the ſerpent," *&c.* (3)

2. It nouriſheth *Contention*.—" *Grammar*,
" *Logic*, and *Criticiſm*, each knoweth nothing
" of Scripture but its words; bringeth forth

(2) Addreſs, p. 96-7. (3) *Letters*, p. 187.

" nothing

" nothing but its *own wisdom* of words, and a " Religion of wrangle, hatred, and contention " about the meaning of them (4)."

3. It turneth Religion to a *trade*.—— " Where *self*, or the *natural man* is become " great in *religious Learning*, there, the greater " the Scholar, the more firmly will he be fixed " in their Religion, *whose God is their belly* (5)."

4. It is *the abomination of desolation*.—" *Genius* and *Learning* entered into the pale of the " Church——Behold, if ever, *the abomination* " *of desolation* standing in the holy place.—— " Christ has no where spoken one single word, " or given the least power to *Logic*, *Learning*, " or the *natural powers of man* IN HIS KING- " DOM (6)." By this, we find, that CHRIST's KINGDOM may be usurped as well by *classic Learning* as by CHURCH DISCIPLINE. It is certain, our modern ideas of *religious Liberty* can consist with neither of them, for this *Liberty* claims an exemption both from REASON and OBEDIENCE.

5. It chuseth *darkness rather than light*.—— " But now, Who can more reject this divine " light" [i. e. the *light of the world*, reilluminated by the *blessed Jacob*, as he calls him] " or " more plainly choose darkness instead of it, " than he who seeks to have his mind enriched, " the faculties of his fallen soul cultivated, by " the literature of Poets, Orators, Philoso-

(4) Address, p. 122. (5) Ibid. p. 59.
(6) Ibid. p. 114.

" phers,

" phers, Sophists, Sceptics and Critics, born " and bred up in the worship and praises of " Idol-Gods and Goddesses."

6. Finally it is a total *Apostacy* from God and Goodness.——" The practice of all Churches " for many ages, has had recourse to *Learning*, " *Art*, and *Science*, to qualify Ministers for the " preaching of the Gospel—To this more than " to any other cause, is the *great Apostacy* of " all Christendom to be attributed.—The death " of all that is good in the Soul, have now " and always had their chief nourishment and " support from the sense of the merit and suf- " ficiency of literal accomplishments—And the " very *life of Jesus in the Soul* is by few people " less earnestly desired, or more hard to be " practised than by *great Wits*, *Classical-Critics*, " *Linguists*, *Historians*, and *Orators* in holy or- " ders (7)."—And again—" This empty *letter-* " *learned knowlege*, which the natural man can " as easily have of the Sacred Scripture and " human matters, as of any other books or " human affairs, this being taken for *divine* " *knowlege* has spread such darkness and delu- " sion all over Christendom, as may be rec- " koned no less than a GENERAL APOSTASY " from the Gospel-state of *divine illumina-* " *tion* (8)." We see by this, that the grand mistake of Scholars has hitherto been, in supposing, that the true sense of Scripture is to be discovered by the application of those Principles which enable us to find out the meaning contained in other ancient Books.

(7) *Letters*, p. 37. (8) Address, p. 94.

And now the good man having worked up his *enthuſiaſm* into a poetical ferment, (for, as it has been ſaid, that a Poet is an Enthuſiaſt in ieſt, ſo, he ſhews us, that an Enthuſiaſt may be a Poet in good earneſt) he adorns theſe powerful reaſonings with a ſtring of as beauteous Similes, in diſcredit of *human Learning*.

1. It is compared to the *fall of man*.—"Look "(ſays he) at the preſent ſtate of Chriſtendom, "glorying in the light of *Greek and Roman* "*Learning*, and you will ſee the *fall* of the "preſent Church from its *firſt Goſpel-ſtate*, to "have much likeneſs to the *fall of the firſt di-* "*vine man*, from the glory of paradiſiacal in- "nocence, and heavenly purity, into an earth- "ly ſtate and beſtial life of worldly craft and "ſerpentine ſubtilty (9)."

2. It is directly compared to the *old Serpent*— "What a poverty of ſenſe in ſuch, to ſet them- "ſelves down at the feet of a *Maſter Tully*, "and a *Maſter Ariſtotle!* who only differ from "the meaneſt of all other corrupt men, as the "*teaching Serpent* differed from his fellow-ani- "mals, by being *more ſubtle than all the beaſts* "*of the field* (1)."

3. It is compared to the *Tower of Babel*—— "A *Tower of Babel* may, to its builders eyes, "ſeem to hide its head in the clouds; but as "to its *reaching of Heaven*, it is no nearer to "that than the earth on which it ſtands. It "is thus with all the buildings of Man's wiſ-

(9) Ibid. p. 98. (1) Ibid. p. 139-40.

" dom—He may take the *logic* of Ariſtotle, add " to that the *rhetoric* of Tully, and then aſcend " as high as he can on the ladder of *Poetic* ima- " gination, yet no more is done to the reviving " the loſt life of God in his Soul, than by a " Tower of Brick and Mortar, to reach " Heaven (2)."

4. Again, it is compared to *Idolatry*—" What " is it that moſt of all hinders the *death of the* " *old man?*—It is the fancied riches of *Parts*, " the glitter of *genius*, the flights of *imagina-* " *tion*, the glory of *Learning*, and the ſelf-con- " ceited ſtrength of *natural Reaſon:* Theſe are " the *ſtrong-holds* of fallen Nature, the Maſter- " builders of *Pride's Temple*, and which, as ſo " many *Prieſts*, keep up the *daily worſhip* of " IDOL SELF (3)."

But, now his poetical Enthuſiaſm has blazed itſelf out; and he comes again to himſelf.—We know how the lucid intervals of a Fanatic are wont to be employed; generally in covering the mad- neſs of the *Hot* fit with the moſt deliberate and unbluſhing falſehoods of the *Cold*.

From what hath paſt, raſh Divines might be apt to charge this holy man, ſo meek of Spirit, with *Enthuſiaſm*,—with a brutal ſpite to *Reaſon*, —and with more than Vandalic rage againſt *human Learning*. But they wrong him greatly. 1. As to *Enthuſiaſm*, he ſays,—" What an ar- " gument would this be; *Enthuſiaſts* have made " a bad uſe of the doctrine of being *led by the*

(2) Ibid. p. 104. (3) Ibid. p. 110.

" *ſpirit of God*; ergo, He is *Enthuſiaſtical* who " preaches up the doctrine of being *led by the* " *ſpirit of God.* Now abſurd as this is, was " any of my Accuſers, as high in *Genius*, as " bulky in *Learning*, as *Coloſſus* was in Stature, " he would be at a loſs to bring a ſtronger ar- " gument than this to prove me an *Enthuſiaſt*, " or an abetter of them (4)." This is plainly unanſwerable, unleſs you read, as his Accuſer wrote it, for—*who preaches up the doctrine*—*who* ABUSIVELY *preaches up the doctrine.*

2. " Another Charge (ſays he) upon me, " equally falſe, and, I may ſay, more ſenſeleſs, " is, that I am a declared Enemy to the *uſe of* " *Reaſon in Religion.* And, why? Becauſe in " all my writings I teach that Reaſon *is to be* " *denied.* I own it, and this, becauſe Chriſt " has ſaid, *Whoever will come after me, let him* " *deny himſelf.* For how can a man *deny him-* " *ſelf* without denying *his reaſon*, unleſs *reaſon* " be no part of himſelf (5)?" Now I am at a loſs to know, How any one can become an enemy to another more declared, than by *deny-ing* or *renouncing* that other. Were I to *deny* my Sovereign, I ſhould be ſoon taught to know, that he conſidered me as his enemy, and would probably treat me accordingly. But Sovereign-Reaſon has no *Attorney-General*, unleſs perhaps, it be that *Coloſſus* he ſpeaks of, and ſo loudly defies.—However, if human *Reaſon* can argue no better than Mr. Law, I am ready to *deny* her too.---For, a Man's *ſelf*, I have been taught, has a two-fold acceptation; his *Reaſon*

(4) Ibid. p. 51. (5) Ibid. p. 52.

may

may be called, *himself*, and so may his *Passions*. If therefore he be commanded to *deny himself*, I should conclude, it was not his *better* self, his *Reason*, but the *worse*, his *Passions*, to which the divine Command refers.

3. Then as to *human Learning*, the Charge, he tells us, is as *false and senseless* as the rest.--- "Shew me a Scholar as full of *learning* as the "Vatican is of Books, and he will be just as "likely to give all that he hath for the *Gospel-Pearl*, as he would be, if he was as rich as "Crœsus. LET NO ONE HERE IMAGINE I "AM WRITING AGAINST ALL HUMAN LI-"TERATURE, *arts, and sciences*, or that I "wish, the World to be without them. *I am "no more an Enemy to them*, than to the com-"mon useful labours of life. *It is literal "Learning, verbal contention, and critical strife* "about the things of God that I charge with "folly, and mischief to Religion. And, in this, "I have all learned Christendom, both Popish "and Protestant, on my side; for they both "agree in charging each other, with a bad and "false Gospel-state, because of that, which "their Learning, Logic, and Criticism do for "them (6)." There are no such proficients in *sophistry* as the declared enemies of *Reason*; nor any so dextrous in legerdemain as the meerest bunglers in Mechanics.---He is not an Enemy, he tells us, to *human literature*, but to *literal learning* only: That is, he approves of Learning contained in Letters, but not of Letters contained in Learning. The truth is, he

(6) Ibid. p. 152.

would willingly in this diſtreſs take ſhelter, did he know how, even in the *graceleſs* company of *Men of Taſte*; who, like him, to hide their ignorance, are always ſcoffing at the Pedantry of *literal learning and verbal criticiſm*, with the ſame good ſenſe that an Artificer abuſes thoſe Tools of his trade which he knows not how to work with.———Again, do *Popiſh* and *Proteſtant* Diſputers ever ſay to one another,---*You ſupport a bad and falſe Goſpel by Learning, Logic, and Criticiſm?* Do not their reciprocal accuſations of one another's errors turn upon the WANT *of Learning, Logic, and Criticiſm?* Or was Mr. Law, indeed, ſo ignorant as he pretends, when he ſuppoſes there are now *two* Kinds of Learning, Logic, and Criticiſm, a Popiſh and a Proteſtant; inſtead of *one*, founded and perfected on Principles, held by both Parties in common?---All that they charge on one another is the *abuſe* of theſe Principles.

But to draw towards an end with this furious Behmeniſt———In all this ribaldry, the only chance he has of miſleading illiterate and weak Mortals, is by the repeated inſinuations, that all religious diſſenſions are owing to theſe miſchief-makers, *Reaſon* and *Human Learning*; and that, in their abſence, there is a perfect accord in Religion. But this is the fancy of none but Bards or Enthuſiaſts; who never ſaw, but in poetic, or extatic Viſions, that time when

" Chriſtians and Jews one heavy Sabbath
" kept;
" And all the weſtern World believ'd and
" ſlept.

Before

Before *mortals either writ or read*, the quarrels of Dunces were as fierce as thoſe of Wits. In Religion, the diſſenſions amongſt the *irrational Sects* have ever been as implacable as thoſe amongſt the *Rational*. And if, in thoſe miſerable conflicts, the wounds of the latter went deeper, it was becauſe their force was greater and their weapons better.

To conclude, When I reflect on the wonderful infatuation of this ingenious man, who has ſpent a long life in hunting after, and, with an incredible appetite, devouring, the traſh dropt from every ſpecies of Myſticiſm, it puts me in mind of what Travellers (7) tell us of a horrid Fanaticiſm in the Eaſt, where the Devotee makes a ſolemn vow never to taſte of other food than what has paſſed through the entrails of ſome impure or Savage Animal. Hence their whole lives are paſſed (like Mr. Law's amongſt his Aſcetics) in Woods and Foreſts, far removed from the converſe of mankind.

And now, to turn back to our FREE-THINKER. As profeſſed an Adorer as he would be thought of his Sovereign Miſtreſs, REASON, we ſhall ſee, that the modern Infidel, like the Pagans of old, when their Gods proved unkind, can himſelf, on occaſion, treat his favourite IDOL with the utmoſt ignominy and contempt; for as one of the moſt ingenuous of this holy Brotherhood has freely confeſſed, *When Reaſon*

(7) Tavernier.

is againſt a Man, a Man will always be againſt Reaſon (8).

THEY had ſo long boaſted of the Power of this their favorite Idol, They had ſo loudly trumpeted the virtue of her Orient beam for driving away thoſe Fantoms conjured up by *Revelation*, in the dark Regions of *Superſtition*, that the able and ſober Divine thought it high time to check their impertinent triumphs; and ſhew the World, On which ſide REASON had declared herſelf. In order to this, they inforced and illuſtrated, (defecated from the droſs of the SCHOOLS) the invincible arguments of their Predeceſſors in ſupport of Revelation; to which they added large and noble acceſſions of their own. What was now to be done? The Deiſt could not directly degrade that *Reaſon* which he had already inthroned. Yet finding Her in this ſervice, he thought he had a right to inſinuate that ſhe was no better than ſhe ſhould be; and had, like other common Proſtitutes, changed her name, and affected to be called, POLEMIC DIVINITY.

It muſt be confeſſed, that the unguarded manner in carrying on Theologic controverſy had ſubjected it to much deſerved cenſure. This, joined to the ſort of Learning employed in divers of the more early defences of Religion, where, both the faſhion and ſtandard ſmelt ſtrongly of the barbarous form and baſe alloy of the SCHOOLS, gave them a large handle to run down all the defences that followed. Some

(8) Hobbs.

parts

parts of POLEMIC DIVINITY, appeared, on their Principles, to be trifling; other parts bore hard upon their Concluſions; ſo they took advantage of what was faulty in itſelf, and ſought advantage of what appeared impertinent to them, to ridicule the whole. Hence *Polemic Divinity* became the whetſtone of their wit, and the conſtant Butt of their malice. As the credit of Deiſm advanced, this cant grew familiar, and ſpread itſelf into the faſhionable World. Nor could the divine Genius of thoſe Maſters of Reaſon, a GROTIUS, or an EPISCOPIUS, a HOOKER, or a CHILLINGWORTH, when once nick-named *Polemic Divines*, hinder them from being enrolled amongſt *Scotiſts* and *Thomiſts*, and the verieſt rabble of the Schoolmen, by ſome of the more ignorant or indiſcreet of all Parties. But the thing moſt to be lamented is, to ſee any well-meaning Clergyman of affected taſte and real ignorance, go out of his depth, as well as out of his Profeſſion, to exert his ſmall talents of ridicule on the ſame ſubject, merely for the ſake of being in the faſhion; and, free from all malice as well as wit, treat *Polemical Divinity* (which, for all the hard name, is indeed nothing but a critical examination of the doctrines of our Faith) as cavalierly as ever did Collins or Tindal, Lords Shaftſbury or Bolingbroke. Yet had theſe ſmall-dealers in ſecond-hand Ridicule but the leaſt adverted on their doings, they muſt have ſeen the abſurdity as well as miſchief of ſo unweighed and wanton a conduct.

Their ADVERSARIES had *ſufficient provocation*, and were not without a *plauſible pretence*

for their quarrel with POLEMIC DIVINITY, whether it were employed in ſupporting Revelation in general againſt the common Enemy, or in defending the Goſpel-truths againſt the errors of Sectaries.

The PROVOCATION they had received was not ſmall. The Friends of *Revelation* having a Religion to defend which was founded on the Authority of a Divine Meſſenger, who appealed to *Miracles* performed, and to *Prophecies* fulfilled, They ſuppoſed the moſt ſimple and natural method was to prove the truth of this Religion, as all other human tranſactions are proved, by FACTS. This was at length ſo invincibly performed, that their Enemies were forced to have recourſe to their favourite Deity, REASON, to undo the knot, and free them from their Embarras. Her power, they had long objected to believers, as the only barrier againſt *Superſtition*; and now was the time to preſs it home. "You urge us with *facts*, ſay they, and the *teſtimony of Antiquity*; Supports too ſlender to bear the unnatural load of *Revelation*. A thing impoſſible in itſelf, as it contradicts the eſtabliſhed order of Providence: a thing impoſſible, under the Bible-repreſentation of it, as ſeveral paſſages in that Book directly oppoſe our common notices of God's Attributes. Would you have us give credit to your fond notions of Revelation, let us ſee you ſupport it on our common principles of Philoſophy, natural, dialectic, and metaphyſical. When you have done this, we ſhall be ſatisfied, for on theſe principles only will REASON allow us to ſubmit." This was what they pretended to expect; and Divines took them

them at their word; and immediately entered upon, and soon compleated a defence of Revelation, on this new prescribed method of Proof. How effectually, the prevarication of their Adversaries, of which I am going to speak, amply evinces. For no sooner was that done which they had so vainly represented as impossible, than they changed their tone, and now attempted to ridicule it as a very impertinent atchievement. "It is astonishing (says the Go-"liah of their party) how Divines could take "so much silly pains to establish mystery on "metaphysics, revelation on philosophy, and "matters of fact on abstract Reasoning. Re-"ligion, such as the Christian, which appeals "to facts, must be proved as all other facts that "pass for authentic are proved. If they are "thus proved, the Religion will prevail with-"out the assistance of so much profound Rea-"soning (8)." This was what the learned Divine got for his pains! not only to have his Compliance laughed at, but, what is the common attendant on Ridicule, to have it falsified. *Divines*, we see, are represented as *applying their metaphysics, philosophy, and profound reasoning, to Prophecies, and Miracles.* How gross the misrepresentation! They had more wit, they had more honesty, than to take that *silly pains.* They employed their Philosophy as became such Masters of Reason, not to matters of *fact*, but of *right.* It was pretended that God could not give a *Revelation*; that he could not select a *Chosen People*; that he could not accept a *vica-*

(8) L. Bollingbroke's *Letters concerning the Study and Use of History.*

rious Attonement: And againſt theſe bold aſſertions, the Chriſtian Divine directed all the force and evidence of TRUE PHILOSOPHY. With what ſucceſs, a better poſterity ſhall tell with gratitude. This is the *ſpite*, I meant, which Unbelievers bear to that part of *Polemic Divinity*, which concerns the Being and Nature of Revelation.

The PLAUSIBLE PRETENCE they had to ridicule and contemn the reſt, which is employed in ſettling and adjuſting the various MODES of Religion, comes next to be conſidered. Theſe men holding *Religion* itſelf to be viſionary and fantaſtic, laughed, and naturally enough, to ſee ſuch a buſtle made about its *modes*; which, on their ideas, was a diſpute, about a Nothing once removed.

But now, to ſee the *Friends* of Revelation diſpoſed to laugh with them, and to ridicule either one or other of theſe parts of *Polemic Divinity*, is not amongſt the leaſt of thoſe abſurd perverſities, in which common life, at preſent, ſo much abounds. For is that which makes *our Hope not aſhamed*, and ſupports the *Faith which is counted for righteouſneſs*, is that, I ſay, the natural, the reaſonable object of a *Chriſtian man*'s contempt? But as this latter part is more generally known by the name of *Polemic Divinity*, and is the more uſual topic of faſhionable ridicule, it may be proper to add a word or two on the extreme folly of imitating the airs of our Adverſaries, on this occaſion. We have obſerved that the Freethinker was not without ſome excuſe in laughing at this part of *religious*

gious Controverſy, ſince, on his ideas, it was diſputing about the *modes* of a *non-entity*. But the Chriſtian Divine takes his FAITH for a Reality; and therefore can never deem the *modes* of it to be indifferent; but muſt hold, that, of the various opinions ariſing from thence, ſome, with their truths, may be uſeful, and ſome, with their errors, hurtful to Society: So that when, about theſe *modes*, Churches differ, they become as reaſonably the ſubject of ſerious enquiry, as any other real entities whatſoever; and have their importance in proportion to their good or bad influence on Truth and Virtue. In a word, POLEMIC DIVINITY is, in the fancy of a Libertine, a ſquabble for preference between two Falſehoods; in which, there is room enough for ridicule: But on the Principles of a Believer, it is a conteſt between Truth and Falſehood; in which, there is nothing to be laughed at, though much to be lamented.

CHAP. III.

BUT there was never yet *extravagance*, either of UNBELIEVER or FANATIC, which the over zealous Advocate of Religion and ſober Piety hath not unhappily oppoſed by a contrary, and frequently by as *miſchievous* an *extreme*.

We have ſeen how unwarily ſome of them have been drawn in to depreciate and to degrade HUMAN REASON, when their Adverſaries had

too

too extravagantly advanced it. They have, at other times, advanced it as extravagantly, when their Adverſaries were in an humour to vilify and diſgrace it.

To underſtand what I mean, we muſt go a little back in the Hiſtory of *Fanaticiſm:* And They, whom this matter moſt concerns, will need no other proof of the folly of ſuch a conduct than what ariſes from the hiſtorical detection of it.

The REDEMPTION OF MANKIND by the death of Chriſt, and the SACRIFICE of himſelf upon the Croſs, together with its conſequent Doctrine of JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ALONE, were the great Goſpel-principles on which PROTESTANTISM was founded, on the firſt general Separation from the *Church of Rome:* by ſome, perhaps, carried too far, in their zeal for ſetting it at a mortal diſtance from the Popiſh Doctrine of *Merits*; the Puritanic ſchiſm amongſt us being made on a pretence that the Church of England had not receded far enough from *Rome*. However, being Goſpel-Principles, they were held to be the badge of true Proteſtantiſm by all: When the Puritans (firſt driven by Perſecution from religious into civil Faction, and by theſe Factions heated, on both ſides, into Enthuſiaſm) carried the doctrine of *Juſtification by Faith alone* into a dangerous and impure *Antinomianiſm:* For it is of the very nature of Enthuſiaſm to run all its notions to extremes. The ſpeculation was ſoon after reduced to practice, by means of that knavery which always mixes itſelf with Enthuſiaſm, when

when once the *Fanatic* becomes engaged in Politics. The confuſions which enſued are well known: And no ſmall ſhare of them has been aſcribed to this impious abuſe of the doctrine of *Juſtification by Faith alone*; firſt, by depreciating MORALITY, and then by *diſpenſing* with it.

When the CONSTITUTION was reſtored, and had brought into credit thoſe few learned Divines whom the madneſs of the preceding times had driven into obſcurity, the Church of England, ſtill ſmarting with the wounds it had received from the *abuſe* of the great Goſpel-principle of FAITH, very wiſely laboured to reſtore MORALITY, the other eſſential part of the Chriſtian Syſtem, to its Rights, in the joint direction of the Faithful. Hence, the encouragement the Church gave to thoſe noble Diſcourſes, which did ſuch credit to Religion, in the licentious times of Charles the Second, compoſed by theſe learned and pious men, whom Zealots abuſed by the nick-name of LATITUDINARIAN Divines. But the reputation they acquired by ſo effectually ſuppreſſing theſe rank Seeds of Fanaticiſm, made their Succeſſors ambitious of ſharing with them in the ſame honours: a laudable ambition! but men have ever a vain paſſion for improving upon thoſe who went before. The Church was now triumphant; the Sectaries were humbled; ſometimes oppreſſed; always regarded with an eye of jealouſy and averſion; till at length this Goſpel-principle of FAITH came to be eſteemed by many, as *Fanatical:* And they, who underſtood its true Original, found ſo much difficulty in adjuſting the diſtinct Rights of GRACE and Mo-

MORALITY, that, by the time this Century commenced, things were come to such a pass, (MORALITY was advanced so high, and FAITH so frittered into nonsense) that a new definition of our Religion, in opposition to its Founder's, and unknown to its early Followers, was grown to be the fashionable tenet of the times: and *Christianity*, which till now had been understood as but coeval with REDEMPTION, was henceforth to be esteemed *as old as the* CREATION: an eminent Divine having, in a public Discourse, asserted, without circumstance or restriction, that *Christianity was a republication of the Religion of Nature.* Thus, between the two opposite Parties of Divines, we were, at the same time, left without either *natural* or *revealed* Religion. The one, we see, denied the very being of the *natural*; and the other assured us that the *revealed* was nothing else than that exploded non-entity.

This REPUBLICATION had, in effect, been talked of before, by many others of equal reputation: but being now explained, and ready to be received as the established System, our Adversaries began to think it time to check so ridiculous a triumph; and to *discredit Religion* (which they have always done with much success) *on the Principles of its Defenders.* For, with the wanton Libertine,

——"It is the sport, to see
"The Engineer hoist with his own Petar."

And one of the Party, an Enemy, equally determined, to *Grace* and *Morality*, composed that famous

famous Book, intituled, *Chriſtianity as Old as the Creation*, to decry all *Revelation* whatſoever, on this very principle of a REPUBLICATION; ſo unhappily conceived by modern Orthodoxy, as the ſureſt way of evincing the *reaſonableneſs* of the GOSPEL.

The like Advantage (to put things of a ſort together, for the better illuſtration of the Subject) had, about the ſame time, been taken of our indiſcretions by another of theſe men; and as the reaſoning of TYNDAL was directed to depreciate the Work of REDEMPTION, ſo the argument of COLLINS was inforced to inſult the Character of the REDEEMER. The general body of the PROPHECIES which relate to Jeſus, were, for certain great ends of Providence, ſo contrived as to have a *primary* accompliſhment in the events of the Moſaic Diſpenſation, and a *ſecondary* and final completion in the birth and miniſtry and ſufferings of *Jeſus the Meſſiah*. But the admirable contrivance of divine Wiſdom, in giving to thoſe Predictions a *primary* and a *ſecondary* accompliſhment, being either ſoon forgotten, or generally over-looked, it produced large ſwarms of fanciful and fanatic Allegoriſts, who filled the Church with extravagant whimſies equally diſhonourable to *Reaſon* and *Religion*. Amidſt ſo thick a cloud of nonſenſe, the *logical propriety* as well as *moral fitneſs* of a *ſecondary ſenſe* in the Prophecies relating to Jeſus, being ſwallowed up and loſt, ſome bold and haſty men, ever leaſt qualified to diſtinguiſh between the uſe and the abuſe of a poſitive inſtitution, ventured to condemn *all ſecondary* ſenſes, as irrational and fanatical; and finding

but

but few Prophecies which relate to the MESSIAH, in the *primary*, they were forced upon the desperate expedient of holding, that the Jews, or other Enemies of Christianity, had adulterated and corrupted the whole body of these Prophecies, as they stand at present in our Bibles. But no sooner had Mr. Collins got these rash Men at this advantage, than he insulted them with his Discourse on the *Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion:* In which, he attempts to overthrow the Gospel on these two principles. 1st. That (by the confession of his Adversaries) a *secondary* sense of Prophecies is irrational and fanatical. And 2dly. That (by the confession of all sober men) the Jews had not corrupted or adulterated their Bible. His conclusion is, that *Christian Religion* stands on no solid *grounds or reasons*; Jesus not having, as he pretended, been foretold under the Character of the MESSIAH of the Jews.—And here, let it be observed, that these works of *Tyndal* and *Collins*, both rising on the advantage taken of our follies, are the two most artful and desperate attacks on Revelation, that were ever made since the times of *Celsus* and *Porphyry*.

I have attempted to give a good Account of Mr. Collins's *Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion* elsewhere (1), by confuting his first Proposition, on which the whole attack rises, and shewing the *logical propriety* and *moral fitness* of SECONDARY senses of Prophecy. I shall hereafter have occasion to do equal justice to Mr.

(1) Div. Legat. B. vi. § 5, 6.

Tyndal's

Tyndal's *Chriſtianity as Old as the Creation*. For the only effectual way of anſwering theſe, as indeed all others of the like kind, is to renounce all fanciful Syſtems, and to preſerve inviolate the great Principles of the *Moſaic Law* and the *Goſpel of Jeſus*; Principles which diſcover themſelves, and indeed obtrude themſelves upon us, on a careful ſtudy of thoſe two connected Diſpenſations. When theſe Principles are once forſaken, there is no hurtful indiſcretion to which the ableſt Divines are not ſubject; and of which Unbelievers have not taken advantage. I ſhall, from amongſt many, ſelect an inſtance or two, leaſt likely to give offence. The Advocates of the Church of *Rome*, to evade the charge of Idolatry, with which they are urged by the *Reformed*, pretend that this crime conſiſts in giving the worſhip due to the ſupreme God, to inferior Beings. The excellent Biſhop Stillingfleet, in oppoſing this ſubterfuge, attempted to prove, that the moſt civilized Pagans, who are confeſſed to be Idolaters, did not give the honours due to the *firſt Cauſe* to their inferior Gods; the *firſt Cauſe*, as he pretends, being worſhiped by them, as ſuch: An aſſertion, which, if true, would confute all that the Prophets and Apoſtles ſay concerning the ſtate and condition of the Pagan World. Again, The very learned Dr. Prideaux, to do honour to his exiled Jews, adopts, from Hyde and a rabble of lying Orientaliſts, the idle fable of a Philoſophic Zoroaſter, the ſubverter of Idolatry in Perſia: Little attentive the while, to the more plauſible concluſion of Unbelievers, from the ſame fact; who pretend, that theſe Jews, ſo prone to Idolatry before their *Captivity*, were

were instructed during its continuance, by this Zoroaster, in a better Theology, which gave them juster notions of the Divine Nature, and consequently, of a Crime that, ever afterwards, they held in abhorrence. A conclusion pushed with great advantage by *Collins* and *Morgan*, on the ground thus prepared by Hyde, and further smoothed for them by Dr. Prideaux.

But to go on with our subject, Tyndal's *Christianity as old as the Creation*.

This terrible advantage taken of a Principle become fashionably orthodox, greatly alarmed all serious men; and the feeble Answers given to it, on that Principle, were so little satisfactory, that a commendable effort was made, by some whose Stations supported them in the attempt, to bring back the slighted Doctrine of REDEMPTION, and to reinstate it in its ancient Credit. And a worthy Bishop of London was amongst the first to repair the mischief, which the mistaken labours of his no less worthy Successor, had unwittingly occasioned. So that, in a little time, we had regained much of the ground that had been lost, and were ready to replace the national *Faith* once again on its old Gospel-foundation; in spite of the silly pains of a very equivocal Divine, who published a Book, in opposition to the returning Current, intituled, *The Scripture doctrine of Redemption*, which was to prove that in reality there was no such thing: When the old puritan Fanaticism revived, under the new name of *Methodism*; and, as it spread, carried once more (as far as the difference of times would allow) those

thoſe Goſpel-principles to their old abuſive extremes.

This ſoon put a ſtop to the recovery of that middle way, in which *Grace* and *Morality* are preſerved in their reſpective rights: an unhappy diſpoſition now appearing in ſeveral Oppoſers of this late revived fanaticiſm, to return back to the old *latitudinarian* exceſſes.

And now comes in (I hope, not improperly) the Caution, for the ſake of which I have given this long detail of our former miſcarriages, to warn men againſt a repetition of them.

For theſe oppoſed doctrines of a REDEMPTION and a REPUBLICATION are not matters of ſo ſlight moment that either of them may be taken up, or laid down at pleaſure, juſt as we are preſſed, on the one hand, by *Infidelity*, or, on the other, by *Fanaticiſm*.

The DOCTRINE OF REDEMPTION, is the primum mobile of the Goſpel-Syſtem. To this the Church muſt ſteadily adhere, let the ſtorm, againſt it, beat from what quarter it may. It is the firſt duty of the Miniſters of Religion, to ſecure this great Foundation: They may then, with ſafety, and not with the leſs ſucceſs, puſh the Enemies of the Church, the Enemies of their Order, nay, even the Enemies of their own peculiar opinions, with all the force they are able; but ever, as we ſay, in ſubſerviency to the EVERLASTING GOSPEL, whoſe main Pillar is this *Doctrine of Redemption*.———

How

How essential a part it is of the Gospel-Œconomy, (interpreted by God's general Dispensation, revealed to mankind, of which the Gospel-Œconomy is the completion) and how agreeable it is to what the best and most received Philosophy teacheth us, concerning the relations between the Creature and the Creator, shall be considered at large in its proper place (2).

I. What better suits the melancholy subject we are now upon, namely, the advantages given to the common Enemy by those who, to get rid of some urgent difficulty, are apt to forsake their Foundations, will be to shew the various and unthought of mischiefs which arise from the folly of attempting to change the nature of the Gospel-Œconomy from a *Redemption of Mankind* to a *Republication of the Religion of Nature*. A folly, by which the great Author of our Salvation becomes dishonoured, and the Christian Faith exposed to the perpetual insults of Libertines and Unbelievers.

1. For he who considers Jesus only in the light of a *Republisher* of the Law of Nature, can hardly entertain a higher opinion of the SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD than some have done of SOCRATES, whom Erasmus esteemed an object of devotion, and many a better Protestant hath thought to be divinely inspired. For was not Socrates, by his preaching up *moral virtue*, and by his dying to bear witness to the *unity* of the Godhead, *made*, to the Grecian People,

(2) Divine Legation, Book IX.

and

and (by means of their extended commerce of politeneſs) to the reſt of mankind, *Wiſdom and Righteouſneſs?* And what more was Jeſus, tho' the Apoſtle adds to thoſe two attributes, theſe two other, of *Sanctification* and *Redemption?* for, according to the principles of this paganized Chriſtianity, his titles of MESSIAH and REDEEMER are reduced to mere figurative and *accommodated* terms.

2. As this Theology degrades Jeſus to the low condition of a Grecian Sophiſt; ſo it renders his Religion obnoxious to the inſults of every daring Impoſtor.

He was ſent, ſay theſe new Doctors of the Church, to teach mankind the worſhip of the true God, and the practice of moral righteouſneſs (3).

"This will be readily allowed, replies an underſtanding MAHOMETAN: And on this very principle, WE hold, that when Jeſus had done his office; and mankind had again relapſed, into *antichriſtian* Idolatry and Polytheiſm, as before into *Pagan*, God ſent OUR PROPHET, who

(3) A celebrated Frenchman, who writes on all ſubjects, and, on all, with equal judgment and capacity, knew better, perhaps, what he was about than theſe Divines, when he went further, and affirmed That Chriſtianity is not only no more than the Religion of nature perfected, but that *it cou'd not poſſibly* be any more.——"Nôtre Religion revélée n'eſt "même, e: *ne pouvoit être*, que cette Loi naturelle "perfectionnée." *Diſcours ſur le Theiſme*, par M. de Voltaire.

worked

worked the like ſudden and ſenſible reformation in the NORTH-EAST, that your Prophet did in the NORTH-WEST."

And this reply, he makes on the very principles of his ALCORAN; which (with profeſſions of the higheſt veneration for the character of JESUS) denies his proper Divinity, and at the ſame time, his death on the croſs. But why, it may be aſked, was this averſion to the PASSION of One whom the Alcoran makes a Mortal? For this plain reaſon, *Mahomet*, who wanted the refinement of our modern *Accommodators*, plainly ſaw that the doctrine of REDEMPTION followed the *paſſion*; compleated the *Scheme of Revelation*; and ſhut out all his bold pretences.

Mr. Otter, an intelligent Frenchman of the Academy Royal of Inſcriptions, *&c.* tells us of a conference he had with a learned Perſian. The Muſſulman ſaid, They reverenced all our ſacred writings except thoſe of St. PAUL—— *qu'ils reſpectent tous, excepté Saint Paul* (4). Why this *exception?* I anſwer, On the Mahometan Principle that *Chriſtianity is only a republication of the Religion of Nature:* for St. PAUL is full of the doctrine of REDEMPTION; explains the Chriſtian Syſtem by it, and makes the whole Faith depend upon it.

What now has our rational *Republiſher* to oppoſe to this modeſt Apology for Iſmaeliſm?

(4) Voiage en Turque et en Perſe, vol. i. p. 22.

All

All he has to say is this, "That Jesus and his Apostles have every where intimated, that the *Gospel* is the last of God's Dispensations; on the terms of which our final doom is to be decided: so that all future Pretenders to the like Office and Character must needs be deemed Impostors."

But here a DEIST would come in, to take advantage of our distress; for (as we have said more than once) it may be observed alike of all these shifting defences, on fanciful, and unscriptural Systems, that they only supply new arms to the various Adversaries of our Faith; a *Deist*, I say, would be ready to reply, "That it is indeed true that Jesus hath declared his own Mission to be the LAST: but that this is a sly contrivance, put in use by every pretended Messenger from Heaven, in order to perpetuate his own Scheme, and to obviate the danger of an antiquated authority. The Impostor, MAHOMET himself hath done it. He, who here obtrudes his *armed* pretensions upon us, hath secured the duration of his sensual Religion by the very same expedient: A thing, in his ideas, so much of course, that he did not even object to JESUS's use of it, who employed it before Him; and for no other purpose than to cut off all following pretensions to the like Character. On the contrary, He avowed and maintained the general truth of the Nazarite's Commission. Now (pursues the Deist) a method employed by a confessed Impostor is taken up with an ill grace by the defender of true Religion. But

I draw a further consequence (says he) against the GOSPEL, from this representation of Christianity. For if the preaching of moral truth and righteousness were the whole of JESUS's Character and Office, then his Mission did not answer its end, the lasting reformation of mankind, in the *knowlege of God*, and in the *practice of Virtue:* since the world soon fell back again into the state from which JESUS had delivered it; as appears from the history of the times in which MAMOMET appeared, and the advantages he made of that degeneracy."

II. Thus subjected to the insults and injuries of all sorts of Impostors, who set themselves to delude the credulous, either by inventing NEW Revelations or by decrying the OLD, do these *Republishers* expose the holy faith of JESUS: That *Faith*, which, we are told, was *founded on a rock*, impregnable to Men and Demons; to the sophisms of Infidelity, and the prestiges of Imposture! And so, indeed, it is, if we will take it as we find it; if we will receive it as it came from above; if we will preserve it pure and entire as it was delivered to the Saints, under the idea of THE REDEMPTION OF THE WORLD, BY THE SON OF GOD, IN THE VOLUNTARY SACRIFICE OF HIMSELF UPON THE CROSS.

This secures the Character of JESUS from the insults of false Pretenders; and his GOSPEL from the injuries of false Reasoners.

1. For, first of all, if JESUS did, indeed, *redeem* Mankind, and restore them to their lost Inheritance; the scheme and progress of Revelation is compleated: which beginning at the LAPSE, naturally and necessarily ends in the restoration and recovery of LIFE AND IMMORTALITY by the death and passion of our Lord. CHRISTIANITY considered in this view (and in this view only, does SCRIPTURE give it us to consider) soon detects all the artful pretences of Imposture; and secures its own honour by virtue of its very *Essence:* the great scene of Providence being now closed, in a full completion of its One, regular, entire, and eternal purpose.

2. Secondly, if JESUS did indeed *redeem* mankind, then did he neither preach nor die in vain: it not being in man's power, with all his malice and perverseness, to defeat or make void the great purpose of his Coming. For though one part of his Mission (according to Paul) was to instruct the world in *Wisdom* (5) and *Righteousness*, which it was in man's power to forget and neglect; yet, what (Paul tells us) is chiefly essential in his Character, and peculiar to his Office, the *Sanctification* and *Redemption* of the World, Man could not frustrate nor render ineffectual: For it is not in man's power to make that to be undone which is once done and perfected.

(5) 1 Cor. i. 30.

The faſtidious Caviller (6) therefore hath employed his pains to little purpoſe in attempting to diſcredit Revelation from this topic, *The moral ſtate of the world, before and ſince the coming of Chriſt.* For, beſides what one might venture to affirm, that, when the compariſon is fully and impartially ſcrutinized, the advantage will be found to lie on the ſide of our Religion; yet, ſuppoſing the Truths preached by JESUS, and the Aſſiſtance given by the Holy SPIRIT, have not much improved the general morals of mankind; How does this tend to the diſcredit of the Goſpel? unleſs it can be ſhewn that the Goſpel hath no natural tendency to make men better. But this is ſo deſperate an undertaking, that, I believe, Infidelity will hardly be perſuaded to engage in it. Indeed the contrary is ſo true, that, (as I have ſhewn elſewhere) when you lay together the ſtate of PAGAN and CHRISTIAN Morals, one manifeſt and eſſential difference is found between them; which is this, That in the Gentile world, men often acted wrong UPON PRINCIPLE; in the Chriſtian, always AGAINST PRINCIPLE (7). Now, not to inſiſt upon the neceſſary reſtraint this muſt needs be upon Vice; it plainly demonſtrates that the NATURAL TENDENCY of the *Goſpel* is to make men virtuous: And, to draw them by a *ſtronger* attraction, did not ſuit the genius of a rational Religion, whoſe objects were free Agents.

(6) Lord Bolingbroke.
(7) Div. Leg. Book iv. § 2.

But

But the proper anſwer to this idle cavil ariſes from the explanation given above. To Inſtruct the world in *Wiſdom* and *Righteouſneſs* was but the *ſecondary* end of Chriſt's Miſſion. The FIRST and primary, was to become its SANCTIFICATION and REDEMPTION; *That* muſt needs be common to every Revelation coming from God; *This* is peculiar to the Chriſtian: and *this*, as we have ſhewn, cannot poſſibly be fruſtrated, or rendered ineffectual.

To conclude from what hath been ſaid: As we ſhould not affect to pry into the nature of thoſe things which God hath been pleaſed to withold from our ſearch, and to cover with the ſacred veil of Myſtery; ſo neither ſhould we reject a Truth, expreſly delivered, becauſe we may not fully comprehend the whole reaſon on which it ſtands. In a word, as we ſhould not venture to go on where the ſilence of Scripture directs us to ſtop; ſo neither ſhould we preſume to ſtop where, with ſo loud a voice, it commandeth us to go on.

The ſum of all then is this: REASON biddeth us to keep a MEAN: The great Philoſopher informeth us that NATURE is not able to keep a MEAN (8). What remains but that we fly to GRACE, which, the greater Apoſtle aſſures us, is able: for, *the Spirit helpeth our infirmities* (9). Nor will there be any danger (when, in ſuch a diſpoſition, we apply to this

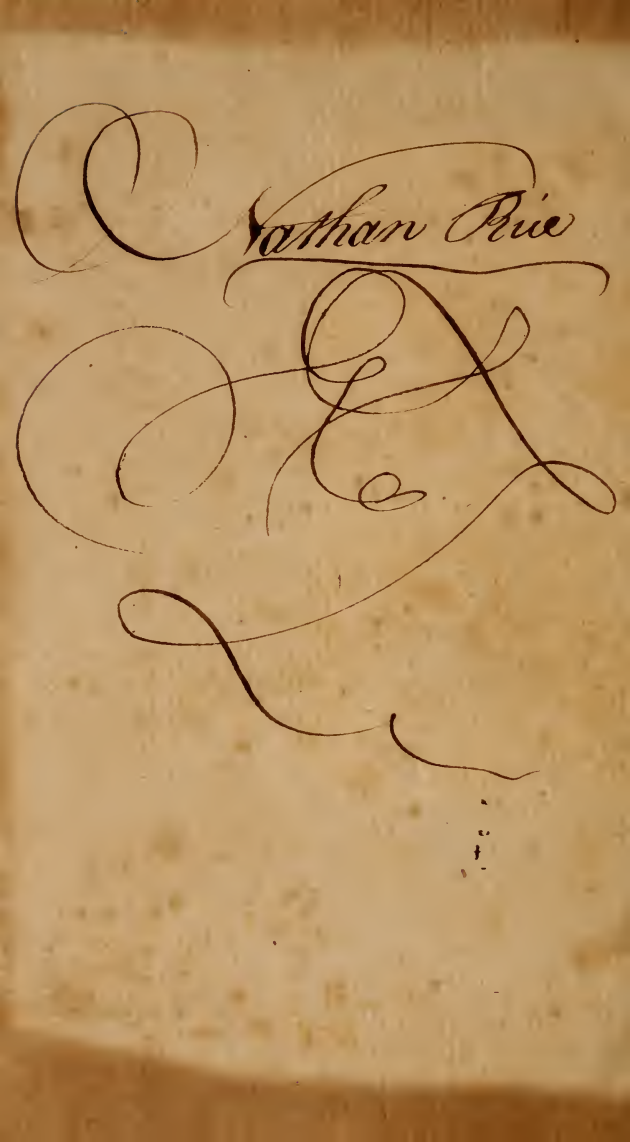
(8) *Natura modum tenere neſcia eſt.* BAC.
(9) Rom. viii. 26.

Guide

Guide of truth) of abusing its credit by fanatical extremes; for, to *establish the heart with Grace*, the same Apostle informs us, is the only way to prevent our being *carried about with divers and strange Doctrines* of Deceivers (1).

(1) Heb. xiii. 9.

The END.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